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Certified that the thesis entitled "ORNAMENTATION AND DECORATIVE MOTIFS IN THE TEMPLE ART OF RAYALASEEMA" submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY in Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology is a bonafide work done by Sri. V. G. NATARAJAN during the period July 2006 and July 2017 under my supervision. This thesis has not previously formed the basis for the award to the candidate of any Degree or Diploma or other similar title.

Place: Tirupati

Date: 14-7-2017

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Beclaration

I hereby declare that the Thesis work entitled "ORNAMENTATION AND DECORATIVE MOTIFS IN THE TEMPLE ART OF RAYALASEEMA" originally carried out by me under the supervision of Prof. K. REDDEPPA, (Retd.) Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati and this work has not been submitted elsewhere for any other degree, diploma or other similar title.

Place: Tirupati

Date : 14,07,2017

PREFACE

The study of the Ornamentation and decorative motifs in the temple art of Rayalaseema relating to the Pre-Vijayanagara and Vijayanagara has not been seriously studied so far. The Vijayanagara rulers and their previous rulers were great builders and several monuments were erected during their periods in all over Rayalaseema. The ornamental and decorative motifs not only enhanced the beautification of the temples but also sanctified and glorified them. In Rayalaseema region, the major temples are found at Ramagiri, Hemavati, Kadiri, Gorantla, Penukonda. Tadipatri. Lepakshi. Chandragiri. Sompalem. Mangapuram. Narayanavanam, Srikalahasti, Tirupati, Pushpagiri, Rayachoti, Markapuram, Nagalapuram, Srisailam, Ahobilam, etc. They are the treasure houses of with rich ornamentation and decorative motifs.

Since the temples of medieval period abound in Rayalaseema, this work thus becomes the rare attempt in the direction of a detailed study of the ornamentation and decorative motifs in the temple art of medieval period. I have personally visited and prepared a list of medieval temples of Rayalaseema. Though the legacy has not been followed strictly in regard to the decorative motifs and ornamentation in the temple art, of the said region, they express heterogeneous features in their application. The alien impact is also clearly conspicuous in the said art and I also made thorough study of the ornamentation and decorative motifs. This work is entirely based on field work.

The whole work is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction relating to the review of the evolution of ornamentation and decorative motifs in the temple art of Rayalaseema region. The second chapter contains the details of geographical and historical background of the Rayalaseema. The third chapter deals with Pre Vijayanagara Pillars and their decorative motifs. The fourth chapter contains the details pertaining to the Vijayanagara pillars and their decorative motifs in Rayalaseema region. The fifth chapter deals with the ornamentation in the temple art of Rayalaseema region. Chapter six gives the details of the Fauna and Flora as decorative motifs. The seventh chapter summarizes the work with analytical approach and concludes with remarks. Glossary of technical terms and bibliography have also been added to the end of the thesis.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ARAD - Annual Reports of the Archaeological Department

ARE - Annual Reports on Epigraphy

ARSIE - Annual Reports on South Indian Epigraphy

EA - Epigraphica Andhrica

EC - Epigraphica Camatica

EI - Epigraphic India

IAP - Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh

MER - Madras Epigraphical Reports

SII - South Indian Inscriptions

TTDI - Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams Inscriptions

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Chapter-IIntroduction

CHAPTER – I INTRODUCTION

India is a land of supremacies. Each dynasty had its reign for some considerable period and proclaimed its power for that time. During the period of their rule they developed an excellent architecture on a grand scale, only to inspire people. Indian architecture at all times remarkable for the profuseness of its applied decoration at the stage of its development, reached the extreme limit of florid magnificence. It was a period when princely encouragement was given to art which is clear from the external structural remains of the age. It is accepted that the architectural shapes of any country are conditioned by geological and climatic factors, the historical and social background of the people, as well as their religion, which is the most important motive force behind their art impulses. In their construction and maintenance, the temples offered employment to a large number of architects and craftsmen who in turn produced master pieces in stone that have stood intact for centuries. Making of icons in stone and metal and the carving of sculptures on walls was one of the best of the great sculptors workmanship. In the matter of decoration on wall surfaces, ceilings and pillars the builders of the temples i.e. the rulers have made magnificent contribution in this direction. Ornamentation and decorative motifs played a vital role in the art history of India, particularly in Rayalaseema.

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present topic entitled "Ornamentation and decorative motifs in the temple art of Rayalaseema" is an attempt to bring out the minute details of ornamentation and decorative motifs in the Pre-Vijayanagara and Vijayanagara temples of Rayalaseema. The research study discloses the evolution of ornamentation and decorative motifs since the beginning of Indian architecture. It also throws light on different stages of development pertaining to the beginnings of temple architecture. At the same time the research work highlights the significance of ornamentation and decorative motifs in maintaining the balance between temple architecture and its decorations.

The past erudition mainly concentrates on architectural potentialities rather than ornamental decorations. In this direction the research scholar collected data mainly basing on field study. Hence it is felt that the present topic is an apt study for the doctoral research degree to delineate a particular feature of the temple art.

The artistic relics consist of Neolithic implements, seals, buildings, sculptures and implements of copper and bronze found at Mohenjadaro reveal magnificent workmanship in the primitive period. In the historical period, we had ruins of monuments that may be referred to as early period as 500 B.C. But it is only in the age of Asoka, the great Mauryan emperor, that we come across monuments of high quality in large number which enable us to form a definite idea about the nature of Indian art. The first examples of Asokan art are furnished by the monolithic pillars on which his edicts are engraved. Asokan inscriptions are found at Rajulamandagiri in Rayalaseema. The figures of four lions standing back to back, and the smaller figures of animals in relief on the above, all show a highly advanced form of art and their remarkable beauty and vigor, have elicited the highest praise from all the art- critics of the world. As it may be mentioned in this connection that the jewelers of the Mauryan period also exhibit a high degree of technical skill and proficiency. Asoka also built quite a large number of stupas. The stupa is a solid domical structure of brick or stone, resting on a round base. It was sometimes surrounded by a plain or ornamented stone railing with one or more gateways, which were often of highly elaborate pattern and decorated with sculptures. With the Gupta period we enter upon the classical phase of Indian sculpture. The most important contribution of Gupta art is the evolution of the perfect types of divinities, both Buddhist and Brahmanical. The images of Siva, Vishnu and other Brahmanical gods are sculptured in some of the finest panels of the Deogarh temple (Jhansi district) and also occur elsewhere. These images are the best products of Indian art. They present a beautiful figure, full of charm and dignity, a graceful pose and a radiant spiritual expression. In general, a sublime idealism, combined with a highly developed sense of rhythm and beauty are the characteristic feature of the Gupta sculptures. There are vigor and refinement in their design and execution. The intellectual element dominates Gupta art and keeps under control the highly

developed emotional display and the flamboyance of decorative elements which characterize the art of succeeding ages.

The history of art and architecture in the South India begins with the *Pallava* temples, and here for the first time, we meet with the *Dravidian* style. In addition to the temples in the capital city *Kanchi* and other places, some of the rock-cut temples, known as the seven *Pagodas* or *Rathas* of Mahabalipram are built in this style, which may be called as the *Pallava* style. This temple style was noticed at Ramagiri in Chittoor District. The later Pallava temples are small and each of which is cut out of a single big rock — boulder. The *Cholas* who supplanted the *Pallavas* in South India were mighty builders. The *Dravidian* style was developed and almost perfected under them. The best example of this style is furnished by the *Saiva* temple at *Tanjore* built by *Rajaraja*, the great. The massive building is covered from the base to the top with sculptures and decorative mouldings. The *Chola* art is characterised by a massive grandeur. The huge structures were decorated with minute sculptures involving immense labour and infinite pains. According to Fergusson the *Chola* artists conceived like giants and finished like jewelers.

The Chalukyas and the Rashtrakutas who ruled Deccan also were great builders. Near the Chalukyan capital Badami, a number of cave temples, which are dedicated to Brahmanical gods contain a number of fine images and good sculptures. Kailasa temple at Ellora was constructed during the reign of Krishna I (Rasthrakuta) is a marvelous specimen of the Dravidian style. The Hoyasalas who succeeded the later Chalukyas ruled over the Mysore Plateau in the twelth and thirteenth centuries A.D. evolved a new style of architecture. The best known example of the Hoyasala style is the famous Hoysalesvara temple at Halebid or Dwarasamudra. It stands on a terrace, about five to six feet high, paved with stone slabs. The entire height is covered with a succession of eleven running friezes of elephants, tigers, scrolls, horsemen, celestial beasts and birds. Each frieze has a length of 700 feet or more, and the entire surface is covered with not less than two thousand elephants finely executed, and most of them with riders and trappings. Similar elaboration of decoration is found in the remaining ten friezes.

Temple construction became wide spread during the medieval period in Rayalaseema. The temples constructed, improved or renovated in medieval period of Rayalaseema vividly portray the religious persuasions of the people and patrons in general, and also the sectarian preference of Saiva, Vaishnava and Sakti worshippers. Generally, the temples have been designated as major and minor depending on their importance.

Rayalaseema region has rich historical and architectural heritage in medieval period. It is a vibrant region with architectural legacy and continued tradition in architecture. The region has foot prints of architecture from pre- historic period to the down of historical period. The temple building activity in this region became wide spread in the medieval period. At about the first century B.C the Aryan culture seems to have spread well in Rayalaseema¹. The legends accepted at many places, around Agastya, indicate that he was instrumental in spreading Aryan culture. Based on Amaravati findings, it is said that Buddhism was known in Rayalaseema by the fourth century B.C. Satavahana Coins, Stupas, Viharas, and Chaityas revealed the popularity attained by Buddhism. From the beginning of the fourth century A.D, the growth of Brahmanical religion is remarkable due to the patronage given by the Early Pallavas, the greater Pallavas of Kanchi and the Early Chalukyas of Badami. With the revival of Brahmanism, Buddhism was on the decline. During the period from 600 A.D to 900 A.D witnessed the construction of temples.

The temples constructed in medieval period in Rayalaseema vividly Portray the religious persuasions of the people and patrons in general, and also the sectarian preference of Saiva, Vaishnava and Sakti worshippers. In developing Hindu theism Vedic sacrificial cult was held in high esteem during the Satavahana and Ikshavaku periods. The earliest Brahminical structural and the only example of an apsidal temple is found at Gudimallam in the erstwhile Kalahasti Taluk of Chittoor District of Rayalaseema. The Gudimallam Siva linga is the oldest representation of Vedic Rudra integrated into the formless one, i.e. linga for its art is comparable to Bharhut and Sanchi. The sanskritization of several tribes resulted in the absorption of local cults into the Brahmanical religion. The Archaeological evidence from Gudimallam reveals the sacrifice of goats at the alter of the linga. The temple at Gudimallam, originally had an image of Siva linga set on a polished two stone rings and was enclosed by a limestone square railing. The lotus medallions on the rail and linga and the nature of shrine confirm the date of second century B.C. Later in second century A.D an apsidal brick structure was raised enshrining the image and leveling the ground by filling up the entire railing and the double base. It points out that the

apsidal form was equally popular for *Brahmanical* structures as well. Siddhavattam in Kadapa District was one of the famous centers of *Pasupata Saivism* in Rayalaseema². Later in the ninth and tenth centuries witnessed the emergence of the *Kalamukha* sect of *Saivism* in Rayalaseema. Srisailam in Kurnool district and Pushpagiri in Kadapa District were the important centers of *Kalamukha* set of *Saivism*³. The emergence of *Pancharamas* in Rayalaseema was due to the *Kalamukha* Simhaparishad. *Virasaivism* also had its impact in this region. *Vaishnavism* was also flourished and the vaishnavite temples were constructed at Tirupati in Chittoor district.⁴

The Kurnool district from the beginning of the Rashtrakuta rule, witnessed the growth of cultural, religious and architectural activities. What distinguishes this period from the early Chalukyan period is the preference given for the Dravida vimanas and the Phamsana shrine. The Siva temple at Bandatandrapadu, near Kurnool is the example of *Phamsana* order revealing the *Nagara* style conventions⁵. The temple of Phamsana order showing sandhara character, featuring a mukhamandapa, an antarala and a garbhagriha is the Panchalingeswara temple at Panchalingala near Kurnool. It has a simple Phamsana (Pyramidal super structure) with a square sikhara, lacking the sukanasa. The Phamsana type of structures in Mahanandisvara temple at Mahanandi are of simple cella units⁶. Most of these have plain walls except for one which has a strong bhadra Projection. Richly carved door -ways in the standard format of early Chalukyan temples adorn these shrines. This group on stylistic grounds may be dated to late eighth century A.D. Ninth century A.D. witnessed the continuity of building Dravida and Phamsana shrines. Notable examples of the Phamsana veriety exist at Satanikota and Muchumarri in Kurnool district.

The temple architecture of the tenth century is represented by temples built on varied plans such as of square, apsidal, rectangular grouped around the main shrine. *Trikuta* scheme is also represented. Rajarajesvara temple at Veldurti in Kurnool district is the best example. It is an impressive twin shrined temple and entirely built of sand stone. At Muttukuru, in Kadapa district, a dilapidated shrine built of red sand stone consists of a garbhagriha and a mukhamandapa. The

surviving portion exhibits a manchabandha type of plinth and the three jambed doorway decorated with latapatra⁷.

The temples at Naguru, Veldurti, Chilamakuru, Malepadi, Peddamudiyam etc. have inscriptions of -Renati Cholas. These are marvelous examples of brick tradition of later part of eighth century A.D. built on Renadu architectural tradition. Among the later temples relating to the tenth century A.D., The Parasuramesvara temple at Attirala, Kadapa district and the Pallisvaramudaya Mahadeva temple at Kalakada in Chittoor district are noteworthy. Parasuramesvara temple represents apsidal tradition showing oblong exterior and apsidal interior. The temple contains the padabandha type of adhisthana and the wall contains pilasters. The niches topped by the makaratoranas, bhutamala in the prastara region and the wagon vault superstructure are the features of elevation. The superstructure is profusely decorated with vidyadharas, apsaras and divinities. The Pallisvaramudaya Mahadeva temple is an example of vimana form. The Durga temple at Rupanagudi in Kurnool district is an excellent example showing high upapitha, pada-bandha type of adhisthana, kostha-panjaras and niches on the wall and the bhutamala in the prastara region. The splendid doorway with carvings of latapatra, ardharatra, latapatra and stambha is decorated with luxuriant pattern of foliate ereepers, walas etc. in its jambs and the bhutas in between the jambs and Sankhanidhi and Padmanidhi at the base of the jambs. The kapota lintel and the over door with adityas on top of the door are noticed.

In the Nolambavadi, a distinctive style of architecture came into existence and the typical examples are known from Hemavati in Anantapur district. The temples at Hemavati reveal an admixture of the architectural conventions of Karnataka and the western Rayalaseema region. The gateways as found at Hemavati belong to the Nagara tradition i.e. the pratoli type, lacking super structure. The Doddesvara and Akka-Chellelagudi temples are of vimana mode, while the Siddesvara temple at Hemavati represents Phamsana. The Doddesvara temple comprises a garbhagriha, mukhamandapa and an antarala. The Pratibandha type of adhisthana is noted for the astasra kumuda moulding. The wall features include small vatayanas and jalavatayanas inset with a trellis and divinities. This is a notable normative feature of the Nolambavadi style, though it recalls the Andhra-

Karnataka tradition. The mixed usage of the bhuta - gana, hamsa animals etc., is a characteristic feature of the Nolamba temples in Karnataka. The doorway to the mukhamandapa is of the five- jambed variety adorned with the latapatra, mithuna, vyala - stambha and patra. The figures like Ganga, Yamuna, dvarapalas and rishis seated on elephants are carved at the base of the jambs. The upper door jamb carries the astamangalas and Siva in Nataraja aspect. Thus, the richly carved doorways are reminiscent of Papanasi temples. The low - roofed and expansive hall is distinguished for the chitrakhanda and srikara variety of Pillars. The srikara pillar is circular in section and profile and lavishly decorated and is a popular variety seen in the temples of Karnataka from eighth century A.D. Thus the Nolambavadi style as seen at Hemavati is a perfect representation of the Andhara- Karmataka tradition. The sculptures are elegant and carry delicately carved ornaments. In the Nolambavadi art the Umamaheswara form is frequently met with Siva seated in virasana majestically. He carries in his upper arms trisula and sarpa and the object held in the right hand is broken while the left arm encircles the waist of Uma. The slightly tilted head is adorned with a tall jatamakuta embellished with a diadem, pearl strands fashioned into a rope and single and multiple beaded ornaments touching the forehead. The strands of the jata are shown gliding over the shoulders. Third eye is present and the *kundalas* are elaborately carved. The *haras* on the neck and chest region emerge prominently by virtue of the large bended single hara followed by a two stranded hara comprising of diamond and pearl strings flowing in circular fashion. The Yagnopavita is three stranded and broad with four rosettes from which flow the strands of diamond studded yagnopavita. The udarabandha is also carved in similar fashion. Uma holds nilotpala in her left uplifted hand while the right arm rests on the thigh of Siva. Uma's headdress is equally rich, bedecked with pearl strands drawn backwards while the forepart has curly ringlets of hair. She is adorned with variety of beaded necklace among which one glides along the breasts.

In the Rayalaseema region the temple architecture from 1000 A.D to the rise of Vijayanagara dynasty reveal the continuation of *vimana* form exhibiting the influences of Telangana and Chola architectural style. The earliest is the Soumyanatha temple at Nandalur in Kadapa district⁸. It consists of a *mukhamandapa*, an *antarala* and *Garbhagriha*. The features of elevation are the

upapitha, the padabandha, adhisthana, the wall decorated with pilasters and devakostas. The doorways are carved with the latapatra, rupa and patra, the Gajakshmi in lalata and a makaratorana.

The Ornamentation and decorative motifs are primarily meant for the beautification of secular and sacerdotal structures. These decorative devices help us to measure not only the aesthetic sense and artistic skill of the sculptures but also the cultural makeup of the people who lived in a particular period and region respectively. A bewildering variety of art motifs, viz, human, animal, floral, geometrical, mythical etc., are frequently noticed in the temples of Rayalaseema region. It may be noted that while studying these ornamentation and art motifs, their representations that are found in the temples built by the *Pallavas*, Early Chalukyas, *Cholas* and their chieftains and Vijayanagara rulers are taken into consideration with the intention of tracing their evaluation through ages. Especially the sculptures, ornamentation on the pillars, walls, *gopuras*, doors, door - jambs, entrances, pilasters, *kudya- stambas, prakara* walls and ceilings etc. are of special mention in regard to ornamentation. The sculptural art of the Vijayanagara shows the popularity of relief sculptures in the temple art of Rayalaseema. They are mainly confined to the walls of the temples.

Adequate stress on the study of temple art and architecture mainly pertaining to Ornamentation and Decorative Motifs in the Temple art of Rayalaseema is not made so far. In Rayalaseema region the major temples are found at Tirupati, Srikalahasti, Nagalapuram, Narayanavanam, Ramagiri. Somapalem, Srisailam, Ahobilam, Pushpagiri, Vontimitta, Siddavatam, Nandalur, Rayachoti, Hemavati, Lepakshi, Kadiri, Tadipatri etc. These temples attract the devotees from all parts of Andhra Pradesh and else where. The above temples have rich ornamentation and decorative motifs. The present work concerns mainly to analyse and highlight the Ornamentation and Decorative motifs of the temple art of Kadapa, Kurnool Chittoor and Anantapur districts of Rayalaseema.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The secondary sources that yield material for the study on Ornamentation and Decorative Motifs in the Temple Art of Rayalaseema also throw a flood of light

on this topic. The following published works are referred to collect required information on ornamentation and decorative motifs.

The secondary sources that yield material for the study on ornamentation and decorative Motifs in the Temple Art of Rayalaseema also throw a flood of light on the said topic. The following published works are referred to gather required information on ornamentation and decorative motifs.

- V. Kamesvara Rao's, Select Vijayanagara Temples of Rayalaseema, (Hyderabad - 1966) covers almost all the major temples of Rayalaseema and discloses the skeletal view of the temples of Rayalaseema.
- 2. N. Rama Rao's, *The Temples of Srisailam*. (Hyderabad, 1969) gives certain ornamental motifs, particularly the prakara wall decorations of the Srisailam Temple.
- 3. S. Gopalakrishnamuthy's *The Art of Lepakshi*, (Hyderabad, 1970) is an enlightened work pertaining to the art and decorative motifs of Lepakshi temple.
- 4. N.S. Ramaswamy's, Temples of Tadipatri, (Hyderabad, 1976), throws light on the architectural features of both Chintala Venkataramana Swami Temple and Bugga Ramalingesvara Temple of Tadipatri. The Author described certain ornamentations and decorative motifs found on the wall portions, prastara, adhishtana and pillars. Another work entitled, A Monograph of Somapalem Temple, (Hyderabad, 1981), brings out the detailed ornamental features of the kalyamanadapa and mahamandapa of the temple.
- C. Poornachand's The Virabhadra Swami Temple at Lepakshi, (Tirupati, 1984) not only throws light on the temple adornments of Lepakshi but also evolution of ornamental motifs.
- 6. A. Gurumurthy's *Temples of Kadapa District*, (Madras, 1990), is also a considerable work on the temples like Pushpagiri, Vontimitta and Rayachoti.

- 7. P.N. Naidu's The Chola and Vijayanagara Art, A comparative Study of Temples of Chittoor District, (Madras, 1994), gives the details of the ornamentation and decorative motifs. The work helps for the comparative study of the Chola and Vijayanagara ornamentation and decorative motifs.
- 8. K. Reddeppa's, Material Culture depicted in Vijayanagara in Vijayanagara Temples of Rayalaseem, (Delhi, 2000) is a detailed study of the material culture during the Vijayanagara period but also gives the details of the wall decorations, pillars, on which the fauna and flora are vividly delineated.
- D. Kiran Kanth Choudary's Sri Kalahastisvara Temple A study based on Epigraphs and Sculptures, (New Delhi, 2008), is a study mentioning not only the sculptural details but also the temple ornamentation.

The above mentioned works throw a valuable data relating to the present study. However they concentrate more on Art and Architecture but not Ornamentation and Decorative Motifs. Hence, this topic has been selected.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives are framed for the present study

- > To seek information on different types of ornamentation in the temple art of Rayalaseema.
- > To bring out comparative treatment on different types of ornamentation in the said region with that of the other dynasties.
- > To enlighten the multiple types of decorative motifs in temple art and architecture of the said region.

4. METHODOLOGY

To fulfill the objectives mentioned above, the present research methodology followed in this work is both descriptive and analytical. The study is based on mainly on the primary sources particularly field study of temple art and also museum exhibits of the said region. An extensive field work includes the

photographs of the walls, sculptures, pillars, ceilings, lintels, etc. The ornamentation and decorative motifs have been broadly classified into the following categories.

- > Ornamentation of the pillars
- > Varied decorative motifs in the temple art
- Flora and Fauna as decorative motifs.

5. SOURCES

The sources for the study of mode of the Ornamentation and Decorative Motifs in the temple art of Rayalaseema from the beginning to the Vijayanagara period (A.D 6th to 17th century) are principally temples, Sculptural remains and Temple Decorations. Hence an extensive field work has been made to collect data pertaining to the Ornamentation and Decorative Motifs. There are numerous decorative motifs like wall decorations, Pilasters, Superstructure, kumbhapanjaras, Purnakalasas, Entrances, Doorways, Kudya Stambhas, Udumbara, Door- Jambs, lintel, Patanga, Kapota, Architrave or the beam, Prastaras, and ceilings, Floral designs, Human figures, Gandharvas, Female Figures, Dwarfs, the Chaitya arch or Kudu motifs. They serve as the primary data for the study of the Ornamentation and Decorative motifs in the temple Art of Rayalaseema and they form an authentic source material for this study.

Besides the extensive field work, there are some other general Published works on the Art and Architecture which throw a considerable light on Decorative Motifs and Ornamentation. These works contain useful information on the subject. To trace out the similarities and other information about the decoration, the details found in both field work and the published general works are highly useful for the comparative study of Ornamentation and Decorative Motifs in the temple Art of Rayalaseema.

6. SCOPE AND AIM OF THE STUDY

The present study has been aimed to gather much information regarding the Ornamentation and Decorative motifs in the temple art from the sources like.

Temples, Sculptural remains and which will be helpful for a detailed study not known so far. Though meager information is available on ornamentation and decorative motifs, the present work is mainly based on field study. Hither to proper attempt has not been made by any scholar on this topic. Hence, a humble attempt is made in this direction to bring to light various facets of ornamentation and decorative motifs which are reflected in the art of Rayalaseema.

Through the ornamentation and decorative motifs of the Vijayanagara period followed the legacy of the Rayalaseema region, new additions have been made, influenced by the Cultural assimilation of the period. Consequently the art motifs also reflects the alien impact. Since majority of the temples in Rayalaseema region belong to the Vijayanagara period, the other temples which are not large in number, contained their dynastic and art legacies.

7. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The present work consists of seven chapters. Chapter one is an introductory by nature which deals with history of Rayalaseema, review of evolution of ornamentation and decorative motifs, review of literature, sources, Aim, Scope, Methodology and scheme of Chapterisation.

Chapter two deals with geographical conditions and Historical background which forms a frame work for the understanding of art and architecture of Rayalaseema region.

Chapter three concerns with the pillars of the Pre-Vijayanagara period i.e., Buddhist, Mauryan, Chola, Pallava, Hoyasala, Chalukyan, Kadamba and Kakatiyas for proper understanding of the subject.

Chapter four deals with the Vijayanagara pillars and their decorative motifs in Rayalaseema region. Varied types of Vijayanagara pillars and their decorative motifs are dealt with in this chapter. The pillars carved in the Vijayanagara temples are very interesting. They are classified into eight types. The descriptions of the pillars are mentioned in this chapter.

Chapter five refers to the ornamentation or Art Motifs in the Vijayanagara art of Rayalaseema. This chapter covers the ornamentation of Flora and fauna, human figures, kirtimukhas, dwarfs, makaratoranas, gandharvas, chaitya arch or kudu motifs, upapitha, adhistana, wall decorations, Pilasters, super structure, kumbhapanjara, ceilings, lintels, door—jambs, kapota, prastara, etc., which are carved to bring out the artistic decorations of the temples under review.

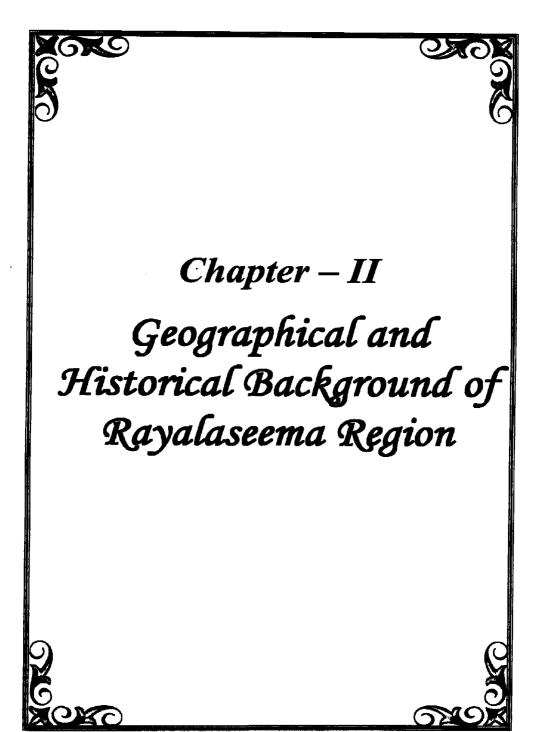
Chapter six concerns the details of the animals and birds as decorative motifs. They are classified into five categories i.e. (1) Creeping creatures (2) Swimming creatures (3) Walking and running animals (4) Jumping animals and (5) Flying birds.

The Seventh chapter summarizes the work with analytical approach and concludes the chapter with figures on temples relating to ornamentation and decorative motifs. Most of these photos have not been published so far and had been taken by me during the field study.

Glossary of Technical terms and Bibliography have been added at the end of the thesis.

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CHAPTER - II

GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF RAYALASEEMA REGION

I. Geography

Geographically, twenty three districts of the state Andhra are divided into three regions Viz. Coastal, Telangana and Rayalaseema. At present the earstwhile AP state is devided into Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. For over years the word Rayalaseema is being used as denoting the area covered by the five districts of Anantapur, Cuddapah, Kurnool, Chittoor and Bellary is now included in the Mysore State. At present the Rayalaseema region consists of four districts Viz. Anantapur, Chittoor, Kadapa and Kurnool. It has borders with Karnataka state on the west, Mahaboobnagar, Prakasam and Nellore districts of Andhra Pradesh on the north, north-east and east respectively, and Tamilnadu state on the south. Historically, the names such as Maharajaranadu or Maharajanadu and Renadu were in vogue for the region. In the late sixteenth century, Rayalavariseema and Rayalaseema were used to refer to a part of the present Rayalaseema for the memory of the famous Rayas of Vijayanagara, who ruled it as a part of their empire, from the fourteenth century to the seventeenth century A.D. The proposal was unanimously carried and the name popularised and got entered in the official records.

In physical terms it is knit together by the hill ranges of the Eastern Ghats, the Seshachalam hill ranges, the Nallamalas, the Erramalas and Sandur hills. The Eastern Ghats known as Velikondalu, run along the eastern borders of Kurnool and Kadapa districts. From Balapalli on the Eastern Ghats run in a south —western direction and spread into Kuppam Mandal of Chittoor district, traversing Chandragiri, Palamaneru and Punganur of Chittoor district. Seshachalam ranges also known as Palakondalu in Kadapa district, start from the Karakambadi- Tirupati ranges (Chittoor district) of the Eastern Ghats and traverse parts of Vayalpadu of Chittoor district and Rajampeta, Rayachoti, Siddhavatam, Kadapa and Pulivendula mandals of Kadapa district. The Muchukota hills in Anantapur district are considered an extension of the Seshachalam hill ranges. The Nallamala hill ranges rise in Kurnool district, stretching from the Tungabhadra river in the north to the Pennar river in Kadapa district in the south, cover the eastern parts of Kurnool

district and Badvel, Kadapa and Proddutur mandals of Kadapa district. The Erramalas rises near Kurnool and spread into Kadapa and Anantapur districts. The Gandikota hills, known after an erstwhile fort on the hills in Jammalamadugu Mandal of Kadapa district, are an extension of the Erramalas. The Sandur hills, known after Sandur, the headquarters of an erstwhile state in the western part of Bellary district run across the district from North-West to South-East and spread into Adoni and Alluru mandals of Kurnool district and Rayadurgam in Anantapur district. Vegetation on most of these hills is either tropical deciduous forest or tropical thorn. Forest on some other areas is devoid of any vegetation. The central portion of the Rayalaseema region is not congenial for the growth of thick forest cover. The thin layer of soil and the lime content with rock formations beneath the surface do not allow the growth of vegetation. The forest cover formed by the hill ranges and groups of hills in the region was 3,289,393 acres in fasli, constituting only 19 percent of the total classified area of 17,334,254 acres of the region.

In Rayalaseema region the land is generally classified into three categories namely wetland, dry land and garden land. Wetland is known as niru - nela or niru - polamu. Wetlands had either a natural or artificial water supply and were used to grow crops like paddy. Two or three crops could be easily raised per year in wetlands with the help of irrigational facilities. Inscriptions referred to different types of wetlands. Chavukabhumi' was the most fertile land made up of sand and red soil. There was no stagnation of water ever during the rainy season and the land was useful both for wet crops like paddy and dry crops like jowar, maize and pulses of all kinds. Another land nirunela was also fertile and crops like paddy were grown in it. It was cultivated mainly with the help of river water.² Other type of land gaddunela³ was also fertile for growing paddy. Regadu bhumi was sandy but fertile. It is also known as Kariyanela or Kariya bhumi. It was suitable to grow cotton, turmeric etc. Two inscriptions of Tailapa, the Kalyani Chalukyan king discovered in Kadapa district mention gifts of land consisting of two marutus of Kariya bhumi, two marutus of gaddu bhumi and a flower garden for naivedya and worship of God.4 Udunu bhumi was also wet land irrigated by artificial tank or canal water to grow paddy.5

Dry land is known as Veltpolamu or Velinela. It is mainly depending on rain - water, for cultivation. Most of the land in Rayalaseema is dry due to lack of rains. The dry land was further sub - divided into four categories. Chalukubhumi or Chelukabhumi was fallow land newly brought under cultivation and used mainly for growing greens. Jonnabhumi is the most suitable land for growing millet. Garuvu bhoomi9 is red or black soil with a mixture of sand or small pebbles suitable for growing millet and turmeric and fruits such as plantain and lemon. Eerranela was suitable for growing dry crops like korra, millet, horsegram, etc. Garden land referred as totala bhumi in the inscriptions. 10 This type of lands was gifted to the temples and were considered a special kind of temple property. Their produce was absolutely necessary for offering worship and food offerings to the deity. Fruits, flowers, coconuts, betel leaves, areca nuts etc. were the chief items of garden produce. An inscription from Chilamakuru in Kadapa district mentions that Vikramaditya Chola's queen Chola Mahadevi and Uttamaditya Samantaka, canoping at Chirumburu made a gift of a garden (vanam) one maruturs in extent.11 Another inscription from the same district refers that the grant of a flower garden was given to a temple. 12

The main occupation of the people was agriculture. More land was brought under cultivation during the seventh and eleventh centuries A.D. The kings and their subordinates encouraged the people for the development of agriculture by granting tax concessions in those who brought land cultivation for the first time. Most of land in this region was fit for dry crops and only a small extent of land was brought under wet and garden cultivation. The crops grown in Rayalaseema were rice, ragi and other dry crops like *korra*, *pulses*, *spices*, *sugar*, *seeds* and oil seeds, dyes, fibres, horsegram, redgram etc. Major parts of Rayalaseema depended upon rains for agriculture.

The Tungabhadra and the Penna are the major rivers in Rayalaseema region. The Tungabhadra which rises in the Western Ghats, flows along the Western and North – Western borders of Bellary district and along the northern border of Anantapur, Kurnool and Kadapa districts before entering Nellore district. Several tributaries join the river at various places in Kadapa district. River Hagri, which also rises in the Western ghats, joins it near Siddaragadde village in Siruguppa taluk

of Bellary district. It flows in full spate during good monsoons and the flow of water becomes thin during off - seasons of the year. The Penna river - takes its meandering course through Bellary, Anantapur, Kurnool and Kadapa districts before entering Nellore district in the east. The Penna river system constitutes a major source of water for Rayalaseema region. Several tributaries join the river at various places in Kadapa district. Two such tributaries that are considered important ones, Papaghni and Chitravati. 13 flow in Chittoor and Anantapur districts before joining the Penna river Cheyyeru, another branch of the Penna river, rises in Chittoor district and joins in Kadapa district. The Kunderu or Kundu and the Sagileru rise in the Erramalas and join the river Penna in Kadapa district. Minor rivers which rise in the hill ranges of the region are the Pandameru and the Tadakaleru in Anantapur district, the Arni, the Pincha and the Swarnamukhi in Chittoor district, and the Handri and the Gundlakamma in Kurnool district, which flow for a few weeks only during the rainy season. The Handri joins the Tungabhadra river near Kurnool, the Pandameru and the Tadakaleru feed the Anantapur and the Singanamala tanks in Anantapur district. The Arni. Pincha, and Swarnamukhi rivers in Chittoor district flow into Tamilnadu state. Kadapa and Nellore districts respectively.

Rayalaseema region has certain limitations in attracting monsoons. The Western Ghats on the west and the Eastern Ghats on the East block the normal course of the South West and the North East monsoons, respectively. The tropical deciduous thorny forests and the barren hills of the region are uncongenial for regular monsoons. Only when cyclonic gales blow heavily does the region receive a fair amount of rainfall. The south – west monsoon occurs during June – September and the north – east monsoon during October – December. Other months of the year have negligible and far too isolated precipitation. Anantapur district, in fact, receives the scanty rainfall in the country.

II. Historical Background:

To understand and appreciate the Ornamentation and Decorative Motifs in the temple art of Rayalaseema, it is essential to know about the historical back ground of this region. The first known important landmark in the history of Rayalaseema is provided by the edicts of Asoka Chakravarthi at Yerragudi¹⁴ and Rajulamandagiri in the Kurnool district. These show that this region formed part of

the Mauryan empire. So, the regular, datable and continuous account of the political history of Rayalaseema begins with the Mauryas. Excavations conducted by I. Karthikeya Sarma within the sanctum of the temple at Gudimallam, Srikalahasti talulk of Chittoor district brought to light a silver punch marked coin of the early Mauryan series. The excavations also revealed that the main Linga in the sanctum of the Gudimallam temple was of the Mauryan times second and third century B.C., and is the earliest known example of its kind in the entire country. These references show that this region formed part of the Mauryan empire. The Mauryan period is thus the starting point in the history of Rayalaseema region.

After the decline of the Mauryas, the region then went under the Satavahanas from third century B.C. to third century A.D. This is evident from the ceramic materials particularly Andhra ware (Russet coated painted ware) unearthed from layer – 2 in the excavations in the Sanctum of the Gadimallam temple. According to Karthikeya Sarma, for the first time, a brick apsidal temple was built around the extent railed *linga* of Gudimallam in the second Century A.D. during the Satavahana rule. During the reign of Gautamiputra Satakarni (78-102 A.D) the Satavahana empire included Rayalaseema region i.e. Anantapur, Chittoor, Kadapa and Kurnool. A large number of ship type coins of Pulumavi III have been obtained on the Coromandal Coast between Madras and Kadalore. An inscription of the last Satavahana ruler was found at Myakadoni in the Kurnool district mentioned a territorial division named the statavahana – ahara. Satavahana coins have been discovered in the Anantapur district. All these evidences indicate that a large portion of the Rayalaseema area was included in the Satavahana empire in the first and second centuries A.D.

The next epoch in the history of the Rayalaseema region was that of the Ikshvakus. The early inscriptions mention two divisions, Viz Pungi – rashtra and Hiranya rashtra, the former corresponding to the area between Srisailam in the Kurnool district in the west and the Bay of Bengal in the east, lying on either bank of a stream named Gundlakamma, and including parts of Kurnool, Nellore and Guntur districts. The latter division was corresponding to parts of Kadapa and Kurnool. The names of these two divisions were derived from two tribes, the

Pugiyas and the Hiranyakas who held cordial relations with the Ikshvakus relations and their feudatories.²⁰ So, this area was closely associated with the Ikshvaku kingdom.

The greater Pallavas held their control over this region from 260 A.D to 900 A.D. during the rule of Sivaskandavarman (A.D. 574 – 600 A.D.) the Pallava Kingdom extended upto the Krishana in the north and the Arabian Sea in the west.²¹ The Parasurameswara temple at Gudimallam (Pl-1) was rebuilt in stone in the Pallava period i.e. eight century A.D.²² The temple at Ramagiri in Chittoor District also bear Pallava features.

The Chalukyan was the most important dynasty that held sway over Deccan since A.D. 543-4, with Vatapi (Badami) as their capital. They brought about political unification by expanding their territory and directly knocking the lines of the Pallava empire. The Rayalaseema region was under the rule of a local dynasty of Chola chiefs during the period of the Pallava - Chalukya wars. The Cholas of the Tamil country scattered from their home land during the period of their weakness, in quest of fortune. The Cholas of Renadu are one such branch, 23 who claim to be the descendents of Karikala Chola. The territory ruled by them was called Renadu 7000 and comprised the tract of land lying along Kunderu and Penna rivers.²⁴ It comprises broadly of a major potion of Kadapa district and parts of Kurnool. Chittoor and Anantapur districts in Andhradesa and Kolar district of Karnataka.²⁵ The Renadu Cholas though descended from the Tamil country adopted Telugu as their language and they are the first rulers of Andhradesa who used the Telugu language in their records.²⁶ Hiranya - rasthra in the Kadapa and Kurnool districts, renamed Renadu 7000, ruled during the 6th 7th and 8th centuries by a branch of the Cholas and popularly known as the Cholas of Renadu, sometimes as feudatories of contemporary powers and sometimes in dependently. The unsettled conditions in the Renadu territory in the ninth century A.D. were favourable for the rise of petty chieftains to power. After a rule of over 200 years, Renadu Chola power was not string enough to resist the invasions of the Banas of Perumbanappadi and were pushed toward north as far as Jammalamadugu. An undated inscription found at Chippili in Chittoor district states that the Banas defeated the Cholas of Renadu (The ruined shrine at Muttukuru, the Agastyesvara temple at Chilamakuru, the

Mulasthanesvara temple at Ramesvaram near Proddutur are notable in the Kadapa district during the reign of Renadu Cholas). The Parasurameswara temple at Attirala in Kadapa district is another Vaidumba temple and drone them to the north towards Kadapa, Proddutur and Siddavatam regions. The Banas flourished in this area as Pallava feudatories. The Vaidumbas, who hailed from Vaidumbavrolu, tried to measure their strength with the Cholas and other powers of the Deccan. An undated inscription of Vaidumba Gandantrinetra at Veligallu near Madanapalli in Chittoor District refers him as ruling over Renadu 7000.²⁷ The Southern parts of Renadu were occupied by the Vaidumbas, while the Banas annexed the region north of the river Penna. The Vaidumbas ruled from eight century to fourteenth century A.D. They held sway over the Renadu territory after the Telugu Cholas and the Banas. The Pallisvaram udaiya Mahadeva temple (Pl-2), now called, the Siva temple at Kalakada in Chittoor District is a notable example for Vadiumba temple architecture.

The Rashtrakutas took over the western part of this area and ruled over Anantapur, Kadapa and Kurnool upto the 973 A.D as contemporaries of the *Pallavas*. So, the friendly relations developed between the *Rashtrakutas* and the *Pallavas*. By the end of the ninth century A.D the *Pallavas* disappeared from the political scene.

The rise of imperial Cholas gave a fresh impetus to interstate rivalries between the north and the south. Aditya I conquered the eastern part of Rayalseema about 900 A.D., upsetting Pallava rule and his successors, from Parantaka to Kulottunga III, continued to rule over this region. The period of later Chola rule coincided with the rise and expansion of the later Chalukyas of Kalyani. The districts of Anantapur, Kadapa and Kurnool became the bone of contention between these two imperial powers. For the most part, however, these districts were under Chalukyan rule while most of the eastern part was under the Cholas. The Telugu Chodas of Nellore and the Yadavaraya Chiefs of Narayanavanam held parts of this area as Chola feudatories. This was a period of brilliant progress in the history of this region.

The Nolambas or the Nollamba Pallavas who ruled over the south -eastern parts of Karnataka and South - western parts of Rayalaseema between the middle of

the eight century A.D. and the middle of the eleventh century A.D. played a significant role. Their capital was Henjeru i.e. modern Hemavati in Amarapuram mandal of Anantapur district known as *Nollambalige* 1000. The Nollamba Pallava kingdom lay between the Rashtrakuta and the Ganga kingdoms. The temples at Hemavati are representative of the *Nollambavadi* architectural style that influenced the upper Karnataka as well as western Andhra temple architecture from tenth century A.D. The details have been discribed in the part of conclusion.

The Kakatiya rulers of Warangal also extended their sway over Rayalaseema under Rudradeva [1136-1158 A.D.], whose boundary touched Srisailam and his more famous nephew Ganapatideva (1198-1262 A.D.), who subjugated the Telugu Chodas of Pottapi and Nellore and minor chiefs like those of the Kayastha family and, annexed the entire Rayalaseema region. The earliest Kakatiya inscription dated 1257 A.D. discovered at Gangavaram in Kondapuram taluk of Kadapa district refers to the Kakatiya king Ganapatidiva. His daughter Rudrama Devi who succeeded figures in a fragmentary inscription of 1268 A.D. at Atturu in Siddhavattam taluk of Kadapa district, as Rudradeva Maharaja and the lord of Anumakondapura. There are number of inscriptions in Kadapa district refers to the successful reign of Prataparudra over these parts. The Rayalaseema region continued to be under Kakatiyas till the end of that rule in 1323 A.D. This period is of particular importance because successive Kakatiya monarchs cleared a number of forests, established a number of settlements and improved all economic conditions of the Rayalaseema area.

The fall of the Kakatiya Empire was followed by the Muslim conquest and temporary occupation under the prince Juna of the Tughlak dynasty of Delhi. Within a short time, however, there was a war of liberation all over Andhradesa. The Rayalaseema area was liberated from Muslim rule by a chief named as Somadeva Maharaja of the Aravidu family. The small kingdom of Kampila was the only independent Hindu State left adjacent to this region.

The foundation of the city and the kingdom of *Vijayanagara* in 1336 A.D, was an event of remarkable consequences in the history of South India. Two brothers named *Harihara* and *Bukka* successively employed as guards of the treasury in the *Kakatiya* captured and imprisioned by Sulthan and *Kampila*

Kingdoms. Mohammad Bin Tughlak was released and sent back to the Rayalaseema and its neighbour hood in order to re-subjugate it on behalf of the Sultan. Harihararaya I and Bukkaraya I succeeded in this mission, brought the entire Rayalaseema under their newly founded capital Vijayanagara from 1336 A.D. onwards. The Rayalaseema area was at the acme of its glory during the rule of successive Vijayanara dynasties i.e. Sangama. Saluva, Tuluva and Aravidu from 1336 A.D. to about 1700 A.D., constitutes the most brilliant epoch in the history of Ravalaseema and its temple architecture. The earliest Vijayanagara inscription found in the Kurnool district dated 1346 A.D.²⁹ records the consecration of god Mulasthana Mallideva at Adakela gunta by a certain Kame Navaka for the merit of king Harihararaya I. The earliest record, found in the Anantapur district is dated 1344 A.D.³⁰ with the help-of his brother Bukkaraya - I. He extended the cultivable area of his kingdom by cutting down forests which covered large tracts in the Rayalaseema. 31 His empire was divided into many provinces generally known as rajyas and mandalas. In the east was the Udayagiri rajya³² which included the present Nellore and Kadapa districts. Candragiri-rajya, and the Muluvayi-rajya. All these territorial divisions were in the Rayalaseema region. Kampana I, a brother of Harihararaya I, was made the Governor of Udayagiri and he ruled it until the time of his death probably in 1355 A.D. It is known that the local tradition that Kampana visited Vontimitta in Siddhayattam taluk of Kadapa district and built a temple (Pl-3) and mandapa for the god Rama.³³ Another Kampana, son of Bukka was ruling over the Muluvavi - raiva. Bukka I was governing the western districts of the Telugu country during the early years of the reign of Harihararava-I.34 The fort Gutti in the Anantapur district is said to have been "the nave of the wheel of the sovereignty over the whole earth" under his control35 Bukka I also figures in the inscriptions of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam. He granted two Villages for two offerings to be made to god Venkateswara at Tirumala.36 Hariharaya II (1377- 1404 A.D) was a devotee of god Mallikarjuna of Srisailam. He built the mukhamandapa before the Mallikarjuna temple at Srisailam and enlarged the mandapa of the southern gopura in the prakara of the same temple.37 His queen Vithalamba, got a flight of steps constructed on the path leading to the Papaganga at Srisailam.³⁸ Devarava II (1922-1446 A.D), the greatest ruler of the Sangam dynasty was an ardent devotee of Srivenkatesvara of Tirumala. He visited the Tirumala temple and worshipped the

god in 1428 A.D. and made a substantial gift for the restoration of *Vedaparayanam* in the temple³⁹ An inscription of Devaraya II dated 1425 A.D. states that the building of a *gopura* to the *Bhairavesvara temple* at Mopur in Kadapa district was made by *Tirumalaraya*, a servant of the king.⁴⁰ Devaraya II also granted land and villages to many temples in Rayalaseema. During the last days of *Sangama* dynasty i.e. the rule of *Mallikarjunaraya* is represented in the records from Tirumala and Tirupati.

A branch of the saluva family was ruling over the Chandragiri - raiva with headquarters at Chandragiri during the reign of Mallikarjunaraya of the Sangama dynasty. Saluva Narasimha succeeded to family estate of the Chandragiri in 1456 A.D.41 He was a great benefactor of the temples of Tirumala and Tirupati. The Saluvabhvudayam of Srirajanatha Dindima mentions that for the purpose of worshipping Vishnu at Tirumala, Saluva made Chandragiri as his residence. 42 The four small pillared pavillions in the four corners of the outer courtyard of the Tirumala temple were built by Saluva Narasimha in 1470 A.D.⁴³ in the name of himself, his wife and his two sons. An inscription dated 1664 AD from Munnar in the south Arcot district states that Chandragiri was being ruled by Daksina Kapileswara kumara Mahaputra, a deputy of the Gajapati king Kapilendra. 44 Obviously, the Gajapatis led an expedition against Chandragiri, during the last days of Sangama rule, on their way to Kanchi and took the fort. But one record found in the above village mentioned that Saluva Narasimha was the ruler of Chandragiri in 1466 A.D. 45 Narasimha must have reconquered Chandragiri and the other parts of the province from the Gajapatis by 1466 A.D. From an inscription dated 1468 A.D. it is known that he built a gopura at the foot of the Tirumala hill and arranged for feeding the visitors in a choultry near it.46 An inscription from Muttukuru,47 Pulivendla taluk of Kadapa district refers to Immadi Narasimha as the ruler of Vijayanagara. His servant was Narasanayaka. On the death of Narasanayaka in 1502 A.D. his son Vira Narasimha (1508-09 A.D), usurped the throne after killing Immadi Narasimha and thus inaugurated the Tululva dynasty. An inscription at Chidipirala in Kadapa district dated 1508 A.D, refers to the rule of Vira Narasimharaya. He was a devotee of god Mallikarjuna of Srisailam. He once visited that temple and paid homage to the god.⁴⁸ Several benefactions were made to the Ramalingesvara temple of Tadipatri (PI-4) during his period. An inscription dated 1509 A.D. records the construction of the bhogamandapa, gopura and prakara in the temple. 49

The Rayalaseema reached the acme of its glory in the reign of the illustrious emperor, Sri Krishnadevarya who ruled from 1509-1529 A.D. He was the ablest and the most celebrated of the Rayas of Vijayanagara, one of the greatest rulers of South India. He was a great benefactor of the temples of Srisailam, Kalahasti and Tirumala. He visited Pushpagiri temples and came to know of the fact that the priests at the temples were Tamballas by caste. He replaced them with Brahmins and granted Goturu and Pushpagiri as agraharas. 50 While returning after the capture of the fortress of Kondavidu from the Gajapatis, he visited Srisailam in the company of his queens Chinnadevi and Tirumaladevi and made valuable gifts to god Mallikarjuna.⁵¹ Sri Krishnadevaraya was an ardent devotee of Sri Venkateswara to whom he dedicated his work Amultamalyada. From his inscription we know that he accompanied by his queens visited the Tirumala temple seven times⁵² and Kalahasti once. The temple Venkateswara of Tirumala contains copper statues of Krishnadevaraya and his queens Chinnadevi and Tirumaladevi (PI-5). The statues have inscriptions incised on the shoulders. An inscription of Krishnadevaraya engraved on the east wall of the Padikavali Gopura of the Tirumala temple gives the genealogy of the Tuluva dynasty.⁵³ It also says that the fort at Chandragiri was renovated during the reign of Krishnadevaraya. He also credited with the construction of the Raja Mahal in the Chandragiri fort.54 Krishnadevaraya built the hundred - pillared mandapa (Pl-6) and the big gopura in the Kalahastisvara temple of Kalahasti in 1516 A.D.⁵⁵ He also improved the fort at Penukonda.

Sri Krishanadevaraya was succeeded by his step brother Achyutaraya (1530-1542 A.D). There are a number of inscriptions referred to the rule of Achyutaraya. He was also a great supporter of the temples of Tirumala and Kalahasti. As emperor, he visited Chandragiri several times and stayed for some time in its fortress in 1532 A.D. ⁵⁶ Achyutaraya visited Tirumala in 1533 A.D. accompanied by his queen Varadaji Amma and his son Kumara Venkatadri, and presented many valuable jewels and dresses to the God. He also presented some more costly jewels on another occasion. ⁵⁷ Achyutaraya sent a dancer named as Hanumasani to serve in the temple of Venkateswara of Tirumala. ⁵⁸ He had also built a temple for Achyutaraya Perumal in the village named Kottur near Kapilatirtam ⁵⁹ and the Queens palace in the Chandragiri fort. ⁶⁰ He also visited Srisailam in 1543 A.D. and made valuable gifts to the temple. ⁶¹ Most of the inscriptions register grants and gifts to the temples

by his subordinates ruling over the Rayalaseema region. Sadasivaraya (1541-1569 A.D) the last ruler of Tuluva dynasty made grants to different temples. Tirumalaraya became the regent and sole guardian for Sadasivaraya. Tirumalaraya proclaimed himself as emperor and thus founded the *Aravidu* dynasty.

After the defeat of the Vijayanagara Armies in the battle of Rakshasi -Tangadi (Tallikota) in 1565 A.D. Tirumalaraya escaped to Vijayanagara, took hold of the phantom emperor Sadasiva and enormous treasures and fled to Penukonda in Anantapur district. He made his three surviving Sriranga, Rama and Venkata to rule over the three main linguistic divisions of the Kingdom i.e. Telugu, Kannada and Tamil. At Penukonda, Sadasivaraya remained king only in name, though in reality a prisoner, until 1568 AD, when Tirumalaraya is said to have murdered him and seized the throne for himself.⁶² Tiumalaraya was succeeded by his son Sri Ranga I in 1572 A.D.⁶³ When the Sultan of Bijapur (Ali Adil Shah) invaded Penukonda in 1576 A.D. Sri Ranga was followed in 1586 by his brother, Venkata II. He shifted the capital from Penukonda to Chandragiri in Chittoor district. He restored the prestige and power of the Vijayanagara Empire. The Sultan of Bijapur, Ibrahim Adil Shah sent an embassy to Chandragiri in 1604 A.D. Probably the Bijapur Sultan wanted to form defensive alliance with Venkata II to check the ambitious schemes of the Mughal emperor, Akbar, Venkata II died in 1614 A.D. He was succeeded by his son Srirangaraya III, the, last ruler of the Aravidu dynasty. His rule is a record of disloyalty and treachery on the part of his subordinates and the internecine warfare in his empire. The Navakas of Madurai and Tanjore and the Odeyars of Mysore became powerful rivals for him. Besides, the intervention of the Bijapur and Golkonda sultans in the South Indian affairs, Srirangaraya's attempts to resist them to defend the Kingdom proved futile. After Srirangaraya the Vijayanagara empire became smaller in size and lost its importance as well as its influence. By 1786 AD when Tippu Sultan of Mysore set a fire to Anegondi, the emperor of Vijayanagara had disappeared. Thus the historical background of the Rayalaseema region shows that this tract had a hoary antiquity.

In spite of political and dynastic struggles, foundations were laid for the growth of *Brahminical* institutions in this region which led to the building of many temples belonging to the Early *Chalukyan*. *Pallava*. *Chola*, and *Vijayanagara*

periods. Temples built in the Early Chalukyan period are found at Satyavolu and Mahanandi (7th C.A.D) in the Kurnool district. The Parasuramesvara temple of Gudimallam in Chittoor district is the only temple of a Pallava monument in the Rayalaseema region. Chola temples are found at Kalahasti, Tondamanad, Jogi -Mallavaram, Laddigam and Melpadi in Chittoor district. Vijayanagara temples are found in the Rayalaseema region in places like, Tadipatri, Lepakshi, Penukonda, Kadiri and Gorantla in the Anantapur district, Pushpagiri, Vontimitta and Rayachoti in the Kadapa district, Somapalem, Narayanavanam, Nagalapuram, Changradiri and Mangapuram in the Chittoor district and Ahobilam and Srisailam in the Kurnool district. The most active period of temple building activity in this region was under the Cholas and the Vijayanagara extending from tenth century A.D. to the middle of seventeenth century A.D. The temple building activity was given due importance by Vijayanayara rulers as well as their feudatories or subordinates. These temples were powerful social and economic institutions. They served as centers for cultural activities. The temple sculptures of different dynasties used the Ornamentation on the Pillars, gopuras, ceilings, doors etc. The temples were decorated with the carvings of animals, birds etc. The following chapters are given an importance to the description of ornamentation and decorative motifs in the temple Art of Rayalaseema region.⁶⁴

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Chapter – III Pre Vijayanagara Pillars and their Decorative Motifs

CHAPTER - III

PRE-VIJYANAGARA PILLARS AND THEIR DECORATIVE MOTIFS

Design of Pillars of temples of India

Pillars or column is one of various types of standing upright, load-bearing architectural members. In history when man has sought to enclose area, supports have been a major part in buildings, from huts to eminent monuments. Already before historic times it was known that such supports were less likely to fall in bad weather if they were inserted in to flat stones and that, if the gaps were left at the top, they would give more stability for the roof. That's why the pillar base was presented and the improvement of the capital prefigured. Pillar is an equipment or a thing in civil, architectural and structural engineering which is used to transit load from one part of the structure to another part of the structure. It is compression member used for this purpose and keep the building straight.

In architecture, "pillar" is a part of structure which also have a decorative and structural properties. A pillar may also be on element for decoration not support and structural purposes; many pillars are "engaged", i.e. they make a part of the structure wall. Design of any product require research and study of the things related to particular product. It is research on most types of pillar existed in history of India or Western culture and architecture.

Study of different types of order present in architecture and parts and nomenclature of pillars are here. This research analyzed the columns or pillars as a vital part or element in architecture aesthetic design and interior design of buildings, monuments and structures. In present time also pillars are an integrated part of our design, art and architecture in people life. The special reference include the evolution, development and alternation done on pillars time to time by various monuments.¹

The Practice of erecting monumental columns may be indigenous to India. Recently strong evidence has been presented by John Irwin to suggest that the Asokan columns may be the culmination of an ancient Pre-Buddhist religious tradition in India of a cult of the cosmic pillar or Axis Mundi.²

The pillar has its beginning from the wood tradition. It was conventional that, the Pre-Mauryan period witnessed, the wooden motifs for all the religious and secular edifices. The caves of the *Mauryan* period imitated the old tradition and substituted stone as the medium of construction even for the pillars.

Similarly the beams seen in front of the caves are in stone medium. Subsequently multiple designed pillars emerged in the course of time in temple construction. The different pillars belonging to different periods or dynasties have been described below:

1. Buddhist Architecture

Buddhist religious architecture developed in the Indian Subcontinent in the 3rd century BC. Three types of structures are associated with the religious architecture of early Buddhism: monasteries (viharas), places to venerate relics (stupas), and shrines or prayer halls (chaityas also called chaitya grihas), which later came to be called temples in some places.

Viharas initially were only temporary shelters used by wandering monks during the rainy season, but later were developed to accommodate the growing and increasingly formalised Buddhist monasticism. An existing example is at Nalanda (Bihar). A distinctive type of fortress architecture found in the former and present Buddhist kingdoms of the Himalayas are dzongs. The initial function of a stupa was the veneration and safe-guarding of the relics of the Buddha. The earliest surviving example of a stupa is in Sanchi (Madhya Pradesh).

In accordance with changes in religious practice, stupas were gradually incorporated into *chaitya-grihas* (prayer halls). These reached their high point in the 1st century BC, exemplified by the cave complexes of Ajanta and Ellora (Maharashtra). The Mahabodhi Temple at Bodh Gaya in Bihar is another well-known example. The Pagoda is an evolution of the Indian *stupa*.

Buddhist architecture emerged slowly in the period following the Buddha's life, along with the Hindu temple architecture. Hindu temples at this time followed a simple plan — a square inner space, the sacrificial arena, often with a surrounding ambulatory route separated by lines of columns, with a conical or rectangular sloping roof, behind a porch or entrance area, generally framed by freestanding

columns or a colonnade. The external profile represents Mount Meru, the abode of the gods and centre of the universe. The dimensions and proportions were dictated by sacred mathematical formulae. This simple plan was adopted by early Buddhists, sometimes adopted with additional cells for monks at the periphery (especially in the early cave temples such as at Ajanta, India).³

In essence the basic plan survives to this day in Buddhist temples throughout the world. The profile became elaborated and the characteristic mountain shape seen today in many Hindu temples was used in early Buddhist sites and continued in similar fashion in some cultures. Early temples were often timber, and little trace remains, although stone was increasingly used. Cave temples such as those at Ajanta have survived better and preserve the plan form, porch and interior arrangements from this early period. As the functions of the monastery-temple expanded, the plan form started to diverge from the Hindu tradition and became more elaborate, providing sleeping, eating and study accommodation.

A characteristic new development at religious sites was the *stupa*. Stupas were originally more sculpture than building, essentially markers of some holy site or commemorating a holy man who lived there. Later forms are more elaborate and also in many cases refer back to the Mount Meru model. One of the earliest Buddhist sites still in existence is at Sanchi, India, and this is centred on a *stupa* said to have been built by King Ashoka(273-236 BCE). The original simple structure is encased in a later, more decorative one, and over two centuries the whole site was elaborated upon. The four cardinal points are marked by elaborate stone gateways.⁴

As with Buddhist art, architecture followed the spread of Buddhism throughout south and East Asia and it was the early Indian models that served as a first reference point, even though Buddhism virtually disappeared from India itself in the 10th century.

Decoration of Buddhist sites became steadily more elaborate through the last two centuries BC, with the introduction of tablets and friezes, including human figures, particularly on *stupas*. However, the Buddha was not represented in human form until the 1st century CE. Instead, aniconic symbols were used. This is treated in more detail in Buddhist art, Aniconic phase. It influenced the development of temples, which eventually became a backdrop for Buddha images in most cases.

As Buddhism spread, Buddhist architecture diverged in style, reflecting the similar trends in Buddhist art. Building form was also influenced to some extent by the different forms of Buddhism in the northern countries, practicing Mahayana Buddhism in the main and in the south where *Theravada* Buddhism prevailed.

Buddhist Pillars

The Buddhist Pillars are mostly found in Western Indian caves particularly at Ajantha, Bhaja, Junnar, Kondanne, Pitalkhora, Bedsa etc. The following five types of pillars are found in the Buddhist caves. They are

- 1. Octagonal pillars without base or capital.
- 2. Hexagonal pillars with one of the faces project to front.
- 3. Square pillars with their arises cut in the middle 1/3 part
- 4. Pillars with octagonal shaft with ornamental pot-base or bell shaped capitals.
- 5. Simple octagonal pillars with square base without capitals. further typological sub-varieties too can be recognized in the above.

A. Octagonal pillars without base or Capital

Pillars of this type are seen exclusively in Ajanta, Cave No:10, Bhaja Cave No.12, Junnar Cave No.3, Kondare Cave No:1 and Pitalkhora cave No.3. In order to neutralize the outward thrust of the carved roof, the pillars are set at an angle. This aspect too indicates an early date for the pillar type.

The use of this pillar type continued even further. The pillars of this stage, are noticeable in the interior of Ajanta cave no.9 and Bedsa cave no.7 and in the apsidal portion of Kanheri no.3, Karle Chaitya hall and Junnar Ganesh cave no.6. These too are vault-roofed chaitya halls. In all these, however, the octagonal pillars are used in the interior only. Pillars of other types too occur along with them. Thus at Ajanta cave no.9, a pair of hexagonal pillars with a face projected to a side (type B) and another pair of pillars of type 'C' have been used in the front part of the pillar line inside the chaitya hall. At Bedsa, a similar feature is present. Besides, the pillars in verandah in that cave of type D. in the Karle Chaitya hall, Kanheri cave no.3, and Junnar-Ganesh pahar cave no. 6 the octagonal pillars are set only at the back, while the pillars on either side of the nave has one of the type D.

B. Octagonal or hexagonal pillars with one face projected

These pillars are used as only subsidiary pillars to be the front most pair of the colonnade inside the chaitya halls where otherwise pillar type A is the general variety employed. Pillars of this type have been noticed in Ajanta Cave No.9, Nasik Cave No.18, Bedsa Cave No.7 and the Karle Chaitya hall.

C. Square pillars with their arises cut in the middle

These pillars of square cross section having the arises cut in the middle part. Usually the pillars are slender and are closely set to carry beams supporting the flat roof. This pillar type was in use in early times only, and occurs in the verandahs of Nasik cave no. 19 and Bhaja cave no. 22. The pillar type C can be considered as a distinctive feature appearing in caves belonging to a period around the time of Kanha (205-183 B.C).

D. Pillars with Octagonal shaft pot-base and pot capitals

The pillars of this type are prolific in occurrence and are seen both in the chetiyagrihas and viharas. The essential features consist of pot-shaped base raised on a stepped square pyramid, octagonal shaft and a capital consisting of a pot/bell surmounted by an invested stepped square pyramid carrying animal figures. There are many sub-varieties too. The idea of pot-base may have been borrowed from the practice seen in large buildings of early times where in pillars are raised on stone bases, as known from the Mauryan pillared hall at Pataliputra. The idea of the capital is distinctly traceable to the Persepolitan and Asokan pillar capitals. The analysis facilitates the grouping of type D pillars in to the following sub-varieties

- i) With octagonal shaft and pot-base only (Eg. Nasik Cave No.18)
- ii) With base similar to it but having elaborate capital of the 'bell' shape with prominent incurve and marked with petals and surmounted by the inverted stepped pyramidal member and the animal sculptures. (eg. Verandah pillars in Bedsa)
- iii) With similar features as ii but having a bell type with the petal markings replaced by broad bands separated by ridge (eg. Pillars in the Karle Chaityahall)

- iv) Similar to iii, but with no ridges on the 'bell'. This looks now like a pot with broad neck and inverted rim (eg. Nasik, Cave No.10).
- v) a) With features similar to iv, but the 'bell' of the capital looks like a globular pot with inverted rim. The animal figures (which were forming part of the capital formerly) are now depicted as reliefs set in line on the beam carried by these pillars. (eg. Junnar-Ganesh Pahar Cave No.6, Nasik Cave No.9).
 - b) Of the same type as v but the pot base is absent, the pillars usually rise from low benches. (eg. Junnar, Ganesh Pahar Cave No.7).
- vi) a) Pot capital similar to v but with no animal sculptures (Eg. Junnar Manmodi 1).
 - b) of the same type as VI a, but the pot base is absent (eg. Junnar Manmodi 2)

E. Simple Octagonal pillars with square base, but no capital

These pillars with simple short octagonal shaft with their lower part square in cross section are seen in the leans only. They rise straight from the base or generally from the backed benches in the verandah (eg. Kanheri Cave No.32, 49, 54, 88,101) etc. Mahad Cave No.2-3, 16-19; Nasik Cave No.5, 6, 8 etc.)⁵

2. Mauryan Architecture

Mauryan art encompasses the arts produced during the period of the Mauryan Empire (4th to 2nd century BC), which was the first empire to rule over most of the Indian subcontinent. It represented an important transition in Indian art from use of wood to stone. It was a royal art patronized by Mauryan kings especially Ashoka. Pillars, *Stupas*, caves are the most prominent examples.

According to Niharranjan Ray, the sum total of the Mauryan treasury of art include the remains of the royal palace and the city of Pataliputra, a monolithic rail at Sarnath, the *Bodhimandala* or the altar resting on four pillars at Bodhgaya, the excavated *Chaitya*-halls in the Barabar and *Nagarjuni* hills of Gaya including the *Sudama* cave bearing the inscription dated the 12th regnal year of Ashoka, the non-edict bearing and edict bearing pillars, the animal sculptures crowning the pillars

- iv) Similar to iii, but with no ridges on the 'bell'. This looks now like a pot with broad neck and inverted rim (eg. Nasik, Cave No.10).
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with animal and vegetal reliefs decorating the abaci of the capitals and the front half of the representation of an elephant carved out in the round from a live rock at Dhauli.⁶

Coomaraswmy argued that the Mauryan art may be said to exhibit three main phases. The first phase was the continuation of the Pre-Mauryan tradition, which is found in some instances to the representation of the *Vedic* deities (the most significant examples are the reliefs of Surya and Indra at the Bhaja Caves.) The second phase was the court art of Ashoka, typically found in the monolithic columns on which his edicts are inscribed and the third phase was the beginning of brick and stone architecture, as in the case of the original stupa at Sanchi, the small monolithic rail at Sanchi and the Lomash Rishi cave in the Barabar Caves, with its ornamentated facade, reproducing the forms of wooden structure.

While the period marked a second transition to use of brick and stone, wood was still the material of choice. Kautilya in the *Arthashastra* advises the use of brick and stone for their durability. Yet he devotes a large section to safeguards to be taken against conflagrations in wooden buildings indicating their popularity.

Megasthenes mentions that the capital city of Pataliputra was encircled by a massive timber-palisade, pierced by loopholes through which archers could shoot. It had sixty-four gates and 570 towers. According to Strabo, the gilded pillars of the palace were adorned with golden vines and silver birds. The palace stood in an extensive park studded with fish ponds. It was furnished with a great variety of ornamental trees and shrubs. Excavations carried out by Spooner and Waddell have brought to light remains of huge wooden palisades at Bulandi Bagh in Pataliputra. The remains of one of the buildings, an 80 pillared hall at Kumrahar are of particular significance. Out of 80 stone columns, that once stood on a wooden platform and supported a wooden roof, Spooner was able to discover the entire lower part of at least one in almost perfect conditions. It is more or less similar to an Ashokan pillar, smooth, polished and made of grey Chunar sandstone.

Many stupas like those at Sanchi, Sarnath and probably Amaravati were originally built as brick and masonry mounds during the reign of Ashoka. Unfortunately they were renovated many times, which leaves us with hardly a clue of the original structures.

This period marked an imaginative and impressive step forward in Indian stone sculpture; much previous sculpture was probably in wood and has not survived. The elaborately carved animal capitals surviving on from some Pillars of Ashoka are the best known works, and among the finest, above all the Lion Capital of Ashoka from Sarnath that is now the National Emblem of India. Coomaraswamy distinguishes between court art and a more popular art during the Mauryan period. Court art is represented by the pillars and their capitals. Popular art is represented by the works of the local sculptors like *chauri* (whisk)-bearer from Didargani. 10

The Pataliputra capital, dated to the 3rd century BC, has been excavated at the Mauryan city of Pataliputra. It has been described as Perso-Iionic, with a strong Greek stylistic influence, including volute, bead and reel, meander or honeysuckle designs. This monumental piece of architecture tends to suggest the Achaemenid and Hellenistic artistic influence at the Mauryan court from early on.

Emperor Ashoka also erected religious pillars throughout India. These pillars were carved in two types of stone. Some were of the spotted red and white sandstone from the region of Mathura, the others of buff-coloured fine grained hard sandstone usually with small black spots quarried in the Chunar near Varanasi. The uniformity of style in the pillar capitals suggests that they were all sculpted by craftsmen from the same region. It would therefore seem, that stone transported from Mathura and Chunar to the various sites where the pillars have been found and here the stone was cut and carved by craftsmen. They were given a fine polish characteristic of Mauryan sculpture. These pillars were mainly erected in the Gangetic plains. They were inscribed with edicts of Ashoka on *Dhamma* or righteousness. The animal capital as a finely carved lifelike representation, noteworthy are the lion capital of Sarnath, the bull capital of Rampurva and the lion capital of Lauria Nandangarh. Much speculation has been made about the similarity between these capitals and Achaemenid works. It

The work of local sculptors illustrates the popular art of the Mauryan period. This consisted of sculpture which probably was not commissioned by the emperor. The patrons of the popular art were the local governors and the more well-to-do subjects. It is represented by figures such as the female figure of Besnagar, the male figure of Parkham and the whisk-bearer from Didarganj. Technically they are

fashioned with less skill than the pillar capitals. They express a considerable earthiness and physical vitality. 12

The stone elephant at Dhauli was also probably carved by local craftsmen and not by the special craftsmen who were responsible for the animal capitals. The image of the elephant emerging from the rock is a most impressive one, and its purpose was probably to draw attention to the inscription nearby.¹³

The pillars of Ashoka are a series of columns dispersed throughout the Indian subcontinent, erected or at least inscribed with edicts by the Mauryan king Ashoka during his reign in the 3rd century BC. Of the pillars erected by him, twenty still survive including those with inscriptions of his edicts. Only a few with animal capitals survive of which seven complete specimens are known.¹⁴

The Pillars of Ashoka are among the earliest known stone sculptural remains from India. Only another pillar fragment, the Pataliputra capital, is possibly from a slightly earlier date. It is thought that before the 3rd century BC, wood rather than stone was used as the main material for India architectural constructions, and that stone may have been adopted following interaction with the Persians and the Greeks.

All the pillars of Ashoka were built at Buddhist monasteries, many important sites from the life of the Buddha and places of pilgrimage. Some of the columns carry inscriptions addressed to the monks and nuns. Some were erected to commemorate visits by Ashoka. The traditional idea that all were originally quarried at Chunar, just south of Varanasi and taken to their sites, before or after carving, "can no longer be confidently asserted", 15 and instead it seems that the columns were carved in two types of stone. Some were of the spotted red and white sandstone from the region of Mathura, the others of buff-colored fine grained hard sandstone usually with small black spots quarried in the Chunar near Varanasi. The uniformity of style in the pillar capitals suggests that they were all sculpted by craftsmen from the same region. It would therefore seem that stone was transported from Mathura and Chunar to the various sites where the pillars have been found, and there was cut and carved by craftsmen. 16

The pillars have four component parts in two pieces: the three sections of the capitals are made in a single piece, often of a different stone to that of the monolithic

shaft to which they are attached by a large metal dowel. The shafts are always plain and smooth, circular in cross-section, slightly tapering upwards and always chiselled out of a single piece of stone. The lower parts of the capitals have the shape and appearance of a gently arched bell formed of lotus petals. The abaci are of two types: square and plain and circular and decorated and these are of different proportions. The crowning animals are masterpieces of Mauryan art, shown either seated or standing, always in the round and chiselled as a single piece with the abaci. ¹⁷ Presumably all or most of the other columns that now lack them once had capitals and animals.

Five of the pillars of Ashoka, two at Rampurva, one each at Vaishali, Lauriya-Araraj and Lauria Nandangarh possibly marked the course of the ancient Royal highway from Pataliputra to the Nepal valley. Several pillars were relocated by later Mughal Empire rulers, the animal capitals being removed.

List of pillars

- Sarnath, near Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, four lions, Pillar Inscription, Schism
 Edict
- Sanchi, near Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, four lions, Schism Edict
- Maker, Chhapra, Bihar, Column with no inscription
- Rampurva, Champaran, Bihar, two columns: bull, Pillar Edicts I, II, III, IV,
 V, VI; bull
- Vaishali, Bihar, single lion, with no inscription
- Sankissa, Uttar Pradesh, elephant capital only
- Lauriya-Nandangarth, Champaran, Bihar, single lion, Pillar Edicts I, II, III,
 IV, V, VI
- Kandahar, Afghanistan (fragments of Pillar Edicts VII)
- Ranigat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan
- Delhi-Meerut, Delhi ridge, Delhi (Pillar Edicts I, II, III, IV, V, VI; moved from Meerut to Delhi by Firuz Shah Tughluq in 1356

- Delhi-Topra, Feroz Shah Kotla, Delhi (Pillar Edicts I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII; moved in 1356 CE from Topra Kalan in Yamunanagar district of Haryana to Delhi by Firuz Shah Tughluq
- Lauriya-Araraj, Champaran, Bihar (Pillar Edicts I, II, III, IV, V, VI)
- Allahabad pillar, Uttar Pradesh (originally located at Kausambi and probable moved to Allahabad by Jahangir; Pillar Edicts I-VI, Queen's Edict, Schism Edict)
- Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh
- Lumbini, Nepal

There are altogether seven remaining complete capitals, five with lions, one with an elephant and one with a zebu bull. One of them, the four lions of Sarnath, has become the State Emblem of India. The animal capitals are composed of a lotiform base, with an abacus decorated with floral, symbolic or animal designs, topped by the realistic depiction of an animal, thought to each represent a traditional directions in India.¹⁸

The most celebrated capital (the four-lion one at Sarnath (Uttar Pradesh)) erected by Emperor Ashoka circa 250 BC also called the "Ashoka Column". Four lions are seated back to back. At present the Column remains in the same place whereas the Lion Capital is at the Sarnath Museum. This Lion Capital of Ashoka from Sarnath has been adopted as the National Emblem of India and the wheel "Ashoka Chakra" from its base was placed onto the centre of the flag of India.

The pillar at Sanchi also has a similar but damaged four-lion capital. There are two pillars at Rampurva, one with a bull and the other with a lion as crowning animals. Sankissa has only a damaged elephant capital, which is mainly unpolished, though the abacus is at least partly so. No pillar shaft has been found, and perhaps this was never erected at the site.

The Vaishali pillar has a single lion capital. The location of this pillar is contiguous to the site where a Buddhist monastery and a sacred coronation tank stood. Excavations are still underway and several stupas suggesting a far flung campus for the monastery have been discovered. The lion faces north, the direction

Buddha took on his last voyage. Identification of the site for excavation in 1969 was aided by the fact that this pillar still jutted out of the soil. More such pillars exist in this greater area but they are all devoid of the capital.

Mauryan Pillars

The Mauryan period (325-185 B.C) is an important land mark in the art history of India. The great contribution made by Mauryas to art and architecture is that they gave up impermanent materials like wood, bambao, clay etc., and introduced permanent material like stone for their monuments, pillars, animal figures etc. According to wheeler the "Assembly hall" was of the audience hall of the king. It was an Assembly hall Of the Buddhists who gathered there for the second general council under the patronage of Asoka. The hall contains 80 stone pillars in eight rows of 10 pillars each. Most of the pillars are in broken condition. An important point to be noted is that these pillars were made of "Chunar sand stone". According to Spooner that the pillar hall of Pataliputra resembled the hundred pillars of Persepolis built by Darius the great. The Mauryan art can be studied under two headings

- i) Mauryan pillars and ii) Mauryan caves
- i) Mauryan pillars: The Mauryan pillars are monolithic pillars having a tall tapering shape with a bell capital, abacus above the bell supporting either a single animal or four animals. The Sarnath pillars have at its top four lions. Above the lions is the Buddhist "Dharmachakra". Asokan pillars belong to three categories 1) Edict bearing pillars, 2) Non edict pillars and, 3) Pillars with dedicated inscriptions.
- a) The earliest stage of pillars is found at Basarh-Bakhira. In this pillar the shape is comparatively short. The abacus is square and without any decoration. It has lion at the top. The next stage of pillar was found at Sankisa. The important change here is that the abacus is round instead of square. This pillar has an elephant at the top.
- b) The next pillar was found at Rampurva. This pillar is in the Champaran district on the border of Bihar and Nepal. In 1877-78 Carlleyle has discovered two Asokan pillars here. One pillar has the bull at the top and the other has the lion at the top.

c) The best preserved *Mauryan* pillar is at Louriya Nandangarh in Champaran district of Bihar. It has a single lion on the top. The pillar has 32¹ height in the air.¹⁹

Another important Asokan pillar is the pillar at Lumbini vana at Nepal. The pillar has a horse at the top which is now broken.

The pillar at Sarnath marks the zenith of the Mauryan art of erecting the pillars. It contains an edict of Asoka. The abacus of this pillar has four animals, that is, horse, elephant, bull and the lion with four 'Chakras' in between them. According to some scholars the four animals stand for the four important events in the life of Buddha. Some other scholars opined that, they are the 'Vahanas' or vehicles of the lords of from directions viz. Indra, Siva, Durga and Surya. The abacus of the Saranath pillar supports four seated lions back to back facing the four directions. The four lions originally supported the Buddhist Dharmachakra, which is fallen. This Saranath capital has been adopted as the emblem of the modern Republic of India.

Foreign influence on Mauryan Pillars

The idea of erecting the pillars might have been borrowed by Asoka from the Percian models. Asokan edicts also show the influence of the imperialistic ideas of the Percian rulers like Darius. The *Mauryan* imperialism and despotism that is reflected in the edicts of *Asoka* is definitely due to the Percian influence. But if we examine carefully the architectural details of the Percian and the *Mauryan* pillars we notice the following differences.

- a) The Percian pillars found an important part of movement that is they are found inside a building supporting the roof of the building, but Mauryan pillars are found in an open space and sometimes they are found infront of the Buddhist stupa as found at Sanchi Stupa.
- b) The shape of the Percian pillar is flooted. The shape of Mauryan pillar is circular.
- c) The Percian pillars have been constructed adopting the structural principles that is filling up forces of stone one above the other, but *Mauryan* pillars are monolithic pillars.

d) The bell is found at the bottom part of the Percian pillar, but the bell is found at the top part of the Mauryan pillar.²⁰

There are varied types of pillars eracted by the different dynasties that ruled over South India.

3. Pallava Architecture

Pallava art and architecture represent an early stage of Dravidian art and architecture which blossomed to its fullest extent under the Chola Dynasty. The first stone and mortar temples of South India were constructed during Pallava rule and were based on earlier brick and timber prototypes.

Starting with rock cut temples, Pallava sculptors later graduated to free-standing structural shrines which inspired Chola temples of a later age. Some of the best examples of Pallava art and architecture are the Kailasanathar Temple at Kanchipuram, the Shore Temple and the Pancha Rathas of Mahabalipuram. Akshara was the greatest sculptor of their time.

Pallava architecture can be sub-divided into two phases - the rock cut phase and the structural phase. The rock cut phase lasted from the 610 to 668 AD and consisted of two groups of monuments - the Mahendra group and the Mamalla group. The Mahendra group is the name given to monuments constructed during the reign of Mahendravarman I (610 - 630 AD). The monuments of this group are invariably pillared halls hewn out of mountain faces. These pillared halls or mandapas follow the prototype of Jain temples of the period. The best examples of Mahendra group of monuments are the cave temples at Mandagapattu, Pallavaram and Mamandur.

The second group of rock cut monuments belong to the Mamalla group (630 to 668 AD). During this period free-standing monolithic shrines called rathas were constructed alongside pillared halls. Some of the best examples of this style are the Pancha Rathas and Arjuna's Penance at Mahabalipuram.

The second phase of Pallava architecture is the structural phase when free-standing shrines were constructed with stone and mortar brought in for the purpose. Monuments of this phase are of two groups - the Rajasimha group (690 to 800 AD) and the Nandivarman group (800 to 900 AD). The Rajasimha group encompasses

the early structural temples of the Pallavas when a lot of experimentation was carried out. The best examples of this period are the Shore Temple at Mahabalipuram and the Kanchi Kailasanathar Temple at Kanchipuram both constructed by Narasimhavarman II who was known as Rajasimha. The best example of the Nandivarman group of monuments is the Vaikunta Perumal Temple at Kanchipuram. During this period, Pallava architecture attained full maturity and provided the models upon which the massive Brihadeeswarar Temple of the Cholas at Thanjavur and Gangaikonda Cholapuram and various other architectural works of note were constructed.

The Pallavas were instrumental in the transition from rock-cut architecture to stone temples. The earliest examples of Pallava constructions are rock-cut temples dating from 610–690 and structural temples between 690–900. A number of rock-cut cave temples bear the inscription of the Pallava king, Mahendravarman I and his successors.²¹

Among the accomplishments of the Pallava architecture are the rock-cut temples at Mahabalipuram. There are excavated pillared halls and monolithic shrines known as Rathas in Mahabalipuram. Early temples were mostly dedicated to Shiva. The Kailasanatha temple in Kanchipuram and the Shore Temple built by Narasimhavarman II, rock cut temple in Mahendravadi by Mahendravarman are fine examples of the Pallava style temples.²² The temple of Nalanda Gedige in Kandy, Sri Lanka is another. The famous Tondeswaram temple of Tenavaraiand the ancient Koneswaram temple of Trincomalee were patronized and structurally developed by the Pallavas in the 7th century.

Pallava Pillars

Pillars were pioneers who took initiative in introducing rock-cut architecture in South India. Their monuments are found at *Mahabalipuram*, *Vallam*, *Mahendravadi*, *Kanchipuram*, *Tiruttan*i etc. The Early *Pallava* architecture can be divided in to three styles namely 1) Mahendra Style and 2) Mamalla Style and 3) Rajasimha style. Accordingly the pillars also vary from one style to another.

1) Mahendra Style: Under the Mahendra style the Pallava caves are excavated at Mahabalipuram, Vallam, Mahendravadi, etc. In this style the pillars are

heavy and stout. The pillars consist of two square blocks with an octagonal shape in between. The *Mahendra* style caves consist of a pillared *mandapa* or a hall. The pillars in the *mandapa* are *massive* with square block at the base and the top with an octagonal shape in between the blocks. The pillars have simple curved *corbels* or *tarangapatta corbels*. The pillared hall is divided into two sections namely proximal and distal. The difference is indicated by an inner row of pillars, the rock portion above the pillars is plain in Mahendra style caves.²³

2) Mamalia Style: This style was initiated by Narasimhavarman – I, In this style there are two categories. a) Cut in caves b) Cut out Rathas. In the cut-in-caves category the pillars are slender and have lion base. The capital has component parts such as tadi, Kumbha, Idal expanding palaka or abacus and taranga corbels. In addition to these changes a slightly curved kapota was found on the pillars. This kapota was decorated with the series of Kuta, Panjara and Sala. The caves of this style are found at Mahabalipuram. Eg. Varaha cave, Mahishamardhani cave, Krishna Mandapa etc. Narasimhavarma-I (630-680 A.D) (the successor of Mahendravaraman – I) had the title "Mamalia". He continued the practice of excavating the cave temples which exhibit some new features. He was also responsible for a new type of Architectural creation known as 'cut out Rathas' which are found at Mahabalipuram.

Features of Mamalla style

- 1. In the *Mamalla* style caves the square and massive pillars were replaced by the tall and slender pillars. Some of them have lion base also.
- 2. The capital was the components of Tadi, Kumbha, idal and Phalaka.
- 3. In the top part of the caves is shown *prastara*. The *prastara* contains the *kapota* decorated with gable designs.
- 4. Above the kapota is a row of kuta, panjara and sala designs.
- 5. The Mandapa as usual is divided into the front and rear sections by an inner row of pillars.²⁴

3. Rajasimha style

The third style of the *Pallava* architecture is *Rajasimha* style. The structural temple at Kanchi and the shore temple at Mahabalipuram belong to the 8th century A.D. There are numerous lion supporting pillars appeared in Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi. According to K.A.N. Sastri that, in the beginning, there were the moderate sized pillared halls with one or more cells cut into the back wall. The front façade has a row of pillars and pilasters; the pillars having square sections at base and top with an octoganal middle section. The larger halls or *mandapas* had an inner row of similar pillars and pilasters. In course of time the pillars were altered to a finer shape and proportion provided with mouldings. Among the modifications made by *Narasimhavarman Mahamalla* and his successors, was the conversion of the base of the pillar in to a squatting lion or *Vyala* which under Rajasimha gave place to pouncing or roaring lion. Moreover, in the earliest examples, there is no cornice above the pillars, but later on a roll moulding was added as at Pallyaram.²⁵

The Features adopted by the Pallavas from the Western Chalukyas

The Pallavas introduced certain changes in the temples, which they built on the western Chalukyan models. These facades were usually more ornamented and contained pillars of a different variety. The pillars became more delicate, slimmer, taller than their predecessors and took various shapes. The round pillar especially with the seated lion seen in the contemporary caves of Andhra Pradesh appears to be an imitation of those in the verandah of cave I at Badami. The Badami caves show two types of pillars, the square and round. The former was a long square shaft with the flat capital on the top with its slightly slashed off. This was the earliest pillar and two pillars with dwarapalas on either side made an early cave at Aihole. It is remarkable to find a parallel to it in the Dharmaraja Ratha at Mahabalipuram. The square pillar at Aihole was later on fully ornamented with straps above and below. filled with figures, while from beneath the first beeing hung garlands and beneath this on each façade was a circle enclosing figures. The other type of pillar at Badami was the round pillar, which has a pedestal now taking a round shape, the kudu or pot like - ornamentation just above the pillar and above this the horizontally and vertically striped capital. This pillar model was transported into Pallava art but with lesser ornamentation. The round Pallava Pillar began to have only the octagonal lines from the top to the bottom while the Pallavas introduced their favourite lion

motif. This is first seen in the *Adivaraha* temple built by Mahendravarman-I, as the pedestal for two pillars. This pillar, later on revived by the Vijayanagara emperors, slowly began to assume a grater ornamanetation.²⁶

4. Chola Architecture

The period of the imperial Cholas (c. 850 CE - 1250 CE) was an age of continuous improvement and refinement of Dravidian art and architecture. They utilised their prodigious wealth earned through their extensive conquests in building long-lasting stone temples and exquisite bronze sculptures.

The Chola temples were built during Chola rule. The Cholas built their temple in traditions way of the Pallava dynasty, who were themselves influenced by the Amaravati school of architecture. The Chola artists and artisans further drew their influences from other contemporary art and architectural schools and elevated the Dravidian temple design to greater heights. The Chola kings built numerous temples throughout their kingdom, which normally comprised the plains, Central and Northern Tamil Nadu and at times the entire state of Tamil Nadu as also adjoining parts of modern Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. In the evolution of the Chola temple architecture we can roughly see three major phases, beginning with the early phase, starting with Vijayalaya Chola and continuing till Sundara Chola, the middle phase of Rajaraja Chola and Rajendra Chola when the achievements scaled heights never reached before or since and the final phase during the Chalukya Chola period of Kulottunga Chola I till the demise of the Chola empire.

Early Chola Temples

Pallavas were the first recognisable South Indian dynasty who indulged in the pursuit of architectural innovations. The first seeds of Dravidian temple architecture in Tamil Nadu were possibly sown during this period. The temple architecture evolved from the early cave temples and monolith temples of Mamallapuram to the Kailasanatha and Vaikuntaperumal temples of Kanchipuram. This architecture style formed the foundation from which the Cholas, who were in close contact with the Pallavas during their periods of decline, took some valuable lessons according to Nilakanta Sastri, in his A History of South India"

The early Cholas built numerous temples. Aditya I and Parantaka I were prolific builders for their faith. Inscriptions of Aditya I record that he built a number

of temples along the banks of the river Kaveri. These temples were much smaller in comparison to the huge monumental structures of the later Cholas and were probably brick structures rather than stone.

The Vijayalacholeswaram near Pudukkottai in Tamil Nadu is an example of a surviving early Chola building. The style of this structure clearly shows Pallava influences in the design. It has an unusual arrangement of a circular garba griha (where the deity resides) within a square prakara - circumbulatory corridor. Above this rises the vimana or the tower in four diminishing storeys of which the lower three are square and the top circular. Each level is separated from the next by a cornice. The whole structure is surmounted by a dome which in turn is topped with a stone kalasa - a crest. Very faint traces of paintings can be seen inside on the walls. These paintings are dated not earlier than the 17th century. The little temple of Nageswara at Kumbakonam is also of the same period.

The Koranganatha Temple at Srinivasanallur near Hirapalli is an example of the period of Parantaka I. This temple is situated on the banks of the river Kaveri, and is a small temple with beautiful sculptures on every surface. The base of the wall has a row of sculpted mythical animals that were a unique feature of Chola architecture. The first floor is made of bricks which have been plastered.

Muvarkovil Temple in the Pudukkottai area was built by a feudatory of Parantaka Chola II during the second half of the tenth century. As the name suggests, the temple complex has three main shrines standing side by side in a row, along the north-south direction, facing west. Out of these three, only two, the central and southern vimanams (towers) are now extant. Of the third or the northern shrine, the basement alone remains. The architectural style of these shrines exhibit clear concordance with the later Chola temples.²⁸

Middle Chola Temples

Temple building received great impetus from the conquests and the genius of Rajaraja Chola and his son Rajendra Chola I. A number of smaller shrines were built during the early phase of this period. Notable amongst these is the Tiruvalisvaram temple near Tirunelveli. The temple is covered with exquisite well composed sculptures and friezes some containing comic figures. The entire cornice of the temple tower is embellished with designs of creepers and foliage. Other examples of

such temples can be seen at the Vaidyanatha Temple at Tirumalavadi and the Uttara Kailasa Temple at Thanjavur.²⁹

The maturity and grandeur to which the Chola architecture had evolved found expression in the two magnificent temples of Thanjavur and Gangaikondacholapuram. The magnificent Siva temple of Thanjavur, completed around 1009 CE is a fitting memorial to the material achievements of the time of Rajaraja.³⁰ The largest and tallest of all Indian temples, it is a masterpiece constituting the high-water mark of South Indian architecture.³¹

It is in this temple that one notices for the first time two gopuras (towers oriented in the same direction. They are architecturally coeval with the main vimana and are referred to in inscriptions as Rajarajan tiruvasal and Keralantakan tiruvasal. In spite of the massive size of the gopuras, the vimana, rising majestically to a height of 190 feet, continues to dominate and it is only in the subsequent period that a change in the gradation of magnitude takes place.

Epigraphic evidence reveals that Rajaraja started building this temple in his 19th regnal year and it was completed on 275th day of his 25th regnal year (1010 CE), taking only 6 years.³² Rajaraja named this temple as Rajarajesvaram and the deity Shiva in Linga form as Peruvudaiyar, the temple is also known in the deity's name as Peruvudaiyarkovil. In later period Maratha and Nayaks rulers constructed various shrines and *gopurams* of the temple. In later period when the Sanskrit language was more popular during the Maratha rule the temple was named in Sanskrit as Brihadisvaram and the deity as Brihadisvara.

The temple stands within a fort, whose walls are later additions built in the 16th century by the Nayaks of Tanjore.³³ The towering *vimana* is about 200 feet in height and is referred to as *Dakshina Meru* (Southern Mountain). The octagonal *Shikharam* (crest) rests on a single block of granite weighing 81 tons.³⁴ It is believed that this block was carried up a specially built ramp built from a site 6 kilometres away from the temple. Huge *Nandis* (figures of the sacred bull) dot the corners of the *Shikharam*, and the *Kalasam* on top by itself is about 3.8 metres in height. Hundreds of stucco figures bejewel the Vimanam, although it is possible that some of these may have been added on during the Maratha period. The main deity is a lingam and is a huge, set in a two storeyed sanctum, and the walls surrounding the

sanctum delight visitors as a storehouse of murals and sculptures. The temple is built entirely of granite, interestingly, in a place where there is no source of granite.³⁵

Though the temple of Gangaikonda Cholapuram follows the plan of the great temple of Thanjavur in most details it has characteristics of its own. From the remains it may be seen that it had only one enclosure wall and a gopura while the Thanjavur temple has two gopuras and enclosures. It is larger in plan though not as tall, the vimana being 100 feet square at the base and 186 feet high. The temple, which forms a large rectangle 340 feet long and 110 feet wide occupies the middle of an immense walled enclosure mainly built for defensive purposes. The vimana has the same construction as in Thanjavur, but the number of tiers making up the pyramidal body is only eight as against 13 in Thanjavur. The most important difference lies in the introduction of curves in the place of the strong straight lines of the Thanjavur vimana. The pyramidal body is slightly concave in its outline at its angles while the sides are curved to produce a somewhat convex outline. These curves enhance the beauty of form of the vimana though they distract from its stateliness and power.³⁶

Later Chola Temples

The Chola style continued to flourish for a century longer and expressed itself in a very large number of temples. Of these two large temples are worthy of comparison to those of Rajaraja and Rajendra.

The Airavateswara temple at Darasuram near Thanjavur built during the reign of Rajaraja Chola II is a magnificent structure typical of the stage of architectural development reached in the 12th century CE. This temple has artistic stone pillars and decorations on its walls, in a style bordering on mannerism, with an emphasis on elongated limbs and polished features. Best among them are the dark black basalt figures in the temple niches of Dakshinamurti, the image on the southern side of Shiva in a teaching attitude, and to the west, Shiva erupting out of the pillar of light to convince Brahma and Vishnu of his superiority. The front mandapam is in the form of a huge chariot drawn by horses.³⁷

The final example of this period is the Kampaheswarar temple at Tribhuvanam near Kumbakonam which has survived in good repair as built by

Kulothunga Chola III. The architecture of this temple is similar to the temples at Tanjore, Gangaikondacholapuram and Darasuram.

Chola Pillars

The Cholas of Tanjore (850 A.D. – 1279 A.D) were not only great conquerors but were also mighty builders who constructed a large number of temples in their empire and also in Rayalaseema. The Chola temples may be studied under three headings. Early Chola temples, Middle Chola temples and later Chola temples, already we are discussed.

In the interior, the pillars with lion-base disappeared in the Chola period. A capital of Chola period has additional neck mouldings. The abacus or *phalaka* became extended along with the *idal*. The *corbel* developed into an animal profile and is often belled so as to lean a triangular tenon like projection. The Vijayalaya Choleswara temple at Narthamalai and Balasubramanyam temple at Pudukkottai are the early Chola temples.

Brihadiswara temple at Tanjore and Brihadiswara temple at Gangai Kondacholapuram are the best examples of middle Chola temples. One important feature of the Brihadiswara temple at Gangaikonda Cholapuram is multiple pillared hall, which anticipated 100 pillared mandapa and 1000 pillared mandapa of the Vijayanagara period of multiple pillared hall. But it contains mukhamandapa and Mahamandapa. The Mahamandapa had the pillars with lotus stalk and pushpabodigai is noticed in the Darasuram temple. This feature is borrowed by the Vijayanagara architecture.

Features of Chola pillars

The Chola architects have introduced new style of pillars in the Darasuram and Tribhuvanam temples. We find four types of pillars.

- 1) Pillar with squatting lions at the base resembling the Pallava pillars.
- 2) Pillars divided into 5 uniform square forms and each side is decorated with a deity figure.

- 3) Pillars with three quarter angle blocks with an octagonal section in between are found. Each side of these quarter angle blocks is decorated with deity and secular figures.
- 4) The pillar with offsets on four sides, each offset is a pilaster. This marks the beginning of the pillar with a pillarette which are found abundantly in Vijayanagara period.³⁸

In the Adityeswara temple, where *Nandimandapa* contains four pillars, the corbels of the pillars are cut at 45° leaving a central segment of the vertical section.

In the Parasareswara temple a narrow *pradakshina* which has three pillars in the south, two in the west and three pillars in the north. Each of these pillars is having the Chola capital with the sides cut at 45° and with a protruding block at the bottom on either side.

The mukhamandapa contains sixteen pillars four rows of four pillars each. All these pillars have circular shafts and the typical Chola capitals. All the pillars in the pradakshina and mukhamandapa are plain bereft of relief sculptures. An interesting feature of this temple is that the shafts of all the pillars are plain and devoid of any sculptural work.

The Mahamandapa of Mogiliswara temple at Mogili has thirty two plain pillars with Chola capitals. In the mukhamandapa the interior has four pillars having the usual Chola capitals.

The pillar in the north-east corner has on its middle square two figures a male and a female, obviously husband and wife standing in *anjali* pose. The *pradakshina* surrounding the *garbhagriha* and *antarala* contains 17 pillars in the southern wing. Twenty one pillars in the western wing, six pillars in the northern wing, all of them with typical Chola capitals.³⁹

5. Hoysala architecture

Hoysala architecture is the building style developed under the rule of the Hoysala Empire between the 11th and 14th centuries, in the region known today as Karnataka, a state of India. Hoysala influence was at its peak in the 13th century, when it dominated the Southern Deccan Plateau region. Large and small temples built during this era remain as examples of the Hoysala architectural style, including

the Chennakesava Temple at Belur, the Hoysaleswara Temple at Halebidu, and the Kesava Temple at Somanathapura. Other examples of Hoysala craftsmanship are the temples at Belavadi, Amruthapura, Hosaholalu, Mosale, Arasikere, Basaralu, Kikkeri and Nuggehalli. Study of the Hoysala architectural style has revealed a negligible Indo-Aryan influence while the impact of Southern Indian style is more distinct. Indian style is more distinct.

Temples built prior to Hoysala independence in the mid-12th century reflect significant Western Chalukya influences, while later temples retain some features salient to Chalukyan art but have additional inventive decoration and ornamentation, features unique to Hoysala artisans. Some three hundred temples are known to survive in present-day Karnataka state and many more are mentioned in inscriptions, though only about seventy have been documented. The greatest concentration of these are in the Malnad (hill) districts, the native home of the Hoysala kings.⁴²

Most Hoysala temples have a plain covered entrance porch supported by lathe turned (circular or bell-shaped) pillars which were sometimes further carved with deep fluting and moulded with decorative motifs. The temples may be built upon a platform raised by about a metre called a "jagati". The jagati, apart from giving a raised look to the temple, serves as a pradakshinapatha or "circumambulation path" for circumambulation around the temple, as the garbagriha (inner sanctum) provides no such feature. Such temples will have an additional set of steps leading to an open mandapa (open hall) with parapet walls. A good example of this style is the Kesava Temple at Somanathapura. The jagati which is in unity with the rest of the temple follows a star-shaped design and the walls of the temple follow a zig-zag pattern, a Hoysala innovation.

The mandapa is the hall where groups of people gather during prayers. The entrance to the mandapa normally has a highly ornate overhead lintel called a makaratorana (makara is an imaginary beast and torana is an overhead decoration). The open mandapa which serves the purpose of an outer hall (outer mandapa) is a regular feature in larger Hoysala temples leading to an inner small closed mandapa and the shrine(s). The open mandapas which are often spacious have seating areas (asana) made of stone with the mandapa's parapet wall acting as a back rest. The seats may follow the same staggered square shape of the parapet wall. The ceiling

here is supported by numerous pillars that create many bays. The shape of the open mandapa is best described as staggered-square and is the style used in most Hoysala temples. Even the smallest open mandapa has 13 bays. The walls have parapets that have half pillars supporting the outer ends of the roof which allow plenty of light making all the sculptural details visible. The mandapa ceiling is generally ornate with sculptures, both mythological and floral. The ceiling consists of deep and domical surfaces and contains sculptural depictions of banana bud motifs and other such decorations.

If the temple is small it will consist of only a closed mandapa (enclosed with walls extending all the way to the ceiling) and the shrine. The closed mandapa, well decorated inside and out, is larger than the vestibule connecting the shrine and the mandapa and has four lathe-turned pillars to support the ceiling, which may be deeply domed. The four pillars divide the hall into nine bays.⁴⁵ The nine bays result in nine decorated ceilings. Pierced stone screens (Jali or Latticework) that serve as windows in the navaranga (hall) and Sabhamandapa (congregation hall) is a characteristic Hoysala stylistic element.⁴⁶

A porch adorns the entrance to a closed *mandapa*, consisting of an awning supported by two half-pillars (engaged columns) and two parapets, all richly decorated. The closed *mandapa* is connected to the shrine(s) by a vestibule, a square area that also connects the shrines. Its outer walls are decorated, but as the size the vestibule is not large, this may not be a conspicuous part of the temple. The vestibule also has a short tower called the *sukanasi* or "nose" upon which is mounted the Hoysala emblem. In Belur and Halebidu, these sculptures are quite large and are placed at all doorways.⁴⁷

The outer and inner mandapa (open and closed) have circular lathe-turned pillars⁴⁸ having four brackets at the top. Over each bracket stands sculptured figures called salabhanjika or madanika. The pillars may also exhibit ornamental carvings on the surface and no two pillars are alike.⁴⁹ This is how Hoysala art differs from the work of their early overlords, the Western Chalukyas, who added sculptural details to the circular pillar base and left the top plain. The lathe-turned pillars are 16, 32, or 64-pointed; some are bell-shaped and have properties that reflect light. The Parsvanatha Basadi at Halebidu is a good example.⁵⁰ According to Brown, the

pillars with four monolithic brackets above them carry images of salabhanjikas and madanikas (sculpture of a woman, displaying stylised feminine features). This is a common feature of Chalukya-Hoysala temples. According to Sastri, the shape of the pillar and its capital, the base of which is square and whose shaft is a monolith that is lathe turned to render different shapes, is a "remarkable feature" of Hoysala art. 51

In Hoysala art Hardy identifies two conspicuous departures from the more austere Western (Later) Chalukya art ornamental elaboration and a profusion of iconography with figure sculptures, both of which are found in abundance even on the superstructure over the shrine. Their medium, the soft chlorite schist (Soapstone) enabled a virtuoso carving style. Hoysala artists are noted for their attention to sculptural detail be it in the depiction of themes from the Hindu epics and deities or in their use of motifs such as yalli, kirtimukha (gargoyles), aedicula (miniature decorative towers) on pilaster, makara (aquatic monster), birds (hamsa), spiral foliage, animals such as lions, elephants and horses, and even general aspects of daily life such as hair styles in vogue. 53

The style of the Hoyasalas were the continuation of a later Chalukyan style. However they also invented some of the new features, like star-shaped plan or stellar plan.

In the Chennakesava temple at Belur there is *Mukhamandapa*. The *mandapa* has closed by a raised parapet wall and above this wall there are perforated windows alternating with pillars. The *mukhamandapa* contains four carved pilasters in the centre. These are highly polished. In the centre there is lotus design with ornate scroll design in the ceiling.⁵⁴

The Hoyasala craftsmen continued to construct the round and square pillars. The former can be seen in the Lakshmidevi temple at Dodda Goddavalli. This pillar had many circles carved into it and over its lotus capital was placed the large flat slab called the *palagai*. Sometimes this plain square pillar was almost cut in to different sections while the entire pillar was made octagonal. The lotus capital or the *munai* is closed here and the *Kalasa* of the entire pillar here assumes a distinct shape being clearly visible without any sculpture on it. The square pillar is more often seen. In the earliest Hoyasala temple this type of pillar is employed for the niche or

the gostapanjaram. It is very plain and straight but the flat slab over the lotus capital is purposely enlarged obviously to support the vimana.

In the Lakshmi Devi shrine at Doddagoddavalli the square pillar has the vase (kalasa) above and stands out clearly with the eight sides marked out on it. This kalasa in the Kesava temple at Belur was carved with two distinct lines. Moreover, the square pillar of the niches became ornate and duplicate in one. Often, the bracket over this square pillar is merely an adaptation of the Kadamba capital which itself was combination of suppressed Pallava and Chola corbels. Soon, however, the pillars of the niche took a round shape in which the kalasa could be easily distinguished by Pushpas. The Hoyasala pillars, both round and square renowned for their perfection, skill and beauty are seen in the Kesava temple at Belur. 55

6. Rashtrakuta Pillars

The Rashtrakuta cave temples are found at Ellora, Elephenta and Jogeswari. In these cave temples pillars are the square sectioned forms prevail and the corbel does not show the characteristic volute on the curved face of corbel arm, but for a weak roll at the upper end. The embellished median band, or *patta*, common in the Chalukyan carbels is absent.⁵⁶

The rock cut shrines at Ellora and Elephanta belong to Rashtrakuta period. Percy Brown puts special emphasis on "The richly carved details and perfect finish, particularly of the pillars" and "the finish and the accuracy of the cutting" of these shrines.⁵⁷

The pillars in the Rashtrakuta caves are of a varied nature and design and are square or octagonal in section, or generally of the Kumbha-valli type with full vases and excrescent foliage at the middle height, or they have cushion — shaped kumbha mouldings in their capitals. The corbels, where present, are either simple or ornate. The cornice or kapota, over the facades and shrine entrances is decorated by horses hoe — shaped kudus which have small nasikas. The façade of the Rameswara Cave has the mukhamandapa and contains four short bulky ornate pillars and two pilasters. The cave no 14 is of simpler plan with a large pillared mandapa. The pillars are of the kumbha-valli type. The pillars are huge in size with kumbhas or

cushion-capitals, and the statues inside are also ponderous and of large proportions. 58

7. Badami Chalukya Architecture

The Badami Chalukya architecture was a temple building idiom that evolved in the $5^{th} - 8^{th}$ centuries in the Malaprabha river basin, in present-day Bagalkot district of Karnataka state. This style is sometimes called the Vesara style and Chalukya style. Their earliest temples date back to around 450 A.D. in Aihole when the Badami Chalukyas were vassals of the Kadambas of Banavasi. According to historian K.V. Sounder Rajan, the Badami Chalukyas contribution to temple building matched their valor and their achievements in battle.

During 450, the Chalukya style originated in Aihole and was perfected in Badami and Pattadakal. The Chalukya artists experimented with different styles, blended the Nagara and Dravidian styles, and evolved Chalukya style. Their style includes two types of monuments. The rock cut halls (caves), Structural temples.

Badami cave temples have rock cut halls with three basic features: pillared veranda, columned hall and a sanctum cut out deep into rock. Early experiments in rock cut halls were attempted in Aihole where they built three cave temples, one each in Vedic, Buddhist and Jaina styles. Later they refined their style and cut out four marvellous cave temples at Badami. One noteworthy feature of these cave temples is the running frieze of *Ganas* in various amusing postures caved in relief on each plinth.

The outside verandas of the cave temples are rather plain, but the inner hall contains rich and prolific sculptural symbolism. Art critic Dr. M. Sheshadri wrote of the Chalukya art that they cut rock like Titans but finished like jewellers. Critic Zimmer wrote that the Chalukya cave temples are a fine balance of versatility and restrain.

The finest structural temples are located in Pattadakal. Of the ten temples in Pattadakal, six are in Dravidian style and four in Rekhanagarastyle. The Virupaksha temple in many ways holds resemblance to the Kailasanatha temple in Kanchipuram which came into existence a few years earlier.

This is a fully inclusive temple, it has a central structure, nandi pavilion in front and has a walled enclosure that is entered by a gateway. The main sanctum has a Pradakshinapatha and mandapa. The mandapa is pillared and has perforated windows (pierced window screens). The external wall surface is divided by pilasters into well-spaced ornamental niches filled with either sculptures or perforated windows. Art critic Percy Brown says about the sculptures that they flow into the architecture in a continuous stream. It is said that the Virupaskha temple is one of those monuments where the spirit of the men who built it, still lives.

Many centuries later, the serene art of the Badami Chalukya reappeared in the pillared architecture of the Vijayanagar Empire. Their caves include finely engraved sculptures of Harihara, Trivikrama, Mahisa Mardhini, Tandavamurthi, Paravasudeva, Nataraja, Varaha, Gomateshvara and others. Plenty of animal and foliage motifs are also included.

The Chalukyan Pillars

The Chalukyan temples are found at Badami, Aihole, Bhokardan, Poona, Arvelam (Goa), Mahur, Advi, Somanpalli, Vijayawada, Mogalrajapuram, Undavalli, Sitaramapuram, Penamaga and Bhairavakonda.

In the above cave temples we can see the heaviness of the Chalukyan pillars as at Badami is apparently reduced by the flutings and carvings. The pillar and corbel shapes are various, but in their development they retain their individuality till the close of Chalukyan period. In Badami there are four cave temples. Cave No.4 is small but Jain. The façade pillars are tall and massive. Often a square section, carrying corbels, or potika supporting the beam. The massive overhanging ledge over the beam forms as the cornice or kapota with ribbing and cross pieces imitating a frame work carved on its curved underside. The inner pillars especially of the inner row of mukhamandapa are square at the base, are of a circular section above, complete with the moulded capital components. The vase shaped kalasa and the cushion-shaped bulbous kumbha are few to mention only the most prominent ones. ⁵⁹

Of the two rock-cut cave temples at Aihole belonging to early Chalukyan or Western Chalukyan series, the pillars are more slender and have the usual capital components of the order.⁶⁰

The Jogesvari cave temple in Salsette, near Bombay, the Patalesvara or Panchalesvara cave temple on Jangli Maharaj Road in Poona, the Hindu cave temple at Mahur in Maharashtra, the cave at Bhokardan near Aurangabad, the group of two adjacent cave temples at Arvelam in Goa contains.... the pillars with more slender shafts and usual capital components.⁶¹

The same features of the above dynasties have been reflected on the pillars found in their temples of the Rayalaseema region. The Eastern Chalukyan cave temples are found at the hills of Vijayawada and Mogalrajapuram in Krishna district; Undavalli, Penamaga and Sitaramapuram in Guntur district. These cave temples have multipillared halls with two rows of pillars and pilasters. The pillars are usually simple, thick-set, short and square in section throughout, or have their middle height beveled at the corners. This results in their middle section being octagonal, while the basal and apical sections are square in plain. The cornice of the façade, the *kapota*, is decorated by *kudu*, or *nasika* arches. The Bhairavakonda cavetemples are excavated in Nellore district. They contain eight large cave temples into two groups. Its pillars are square in section and of the Chalukyan pattern as found in the cave temples on the banks of the Krishna. In some, the pillars have lion caryatids on top and are also lion-based, with capital components above as in the *Mamalla* style cave temples.⁶²

8. Western Chalukya Architecture

Figure sculptures are miniature representations that stand by themselves, including architectural components on pilasters, buildings, sculptures, and complete towers. They are generally categorised as "figure sculpture" or "other decorative features". On occasion, rich figure sculpture can obscure the articulation of a shrine, when representations of gods, goddesses, and mythical figures are in abundance.⁶³

The pillars that support the roof of the mandapa are monolithic shafts from the base up to the neck of the capital. Therefore, the height of the mandapa and the overall size of the temple were limited by the length of the stone shafts that the architects were able to obtain from the quarries. The height of the temple was also constrained by the weight of the superstructure on the walls and, since Chalukyan architects did not use mortar, by the use of dry masonry and bonding stones without clamps or cementing material.⁶⁴

The Western Chalukya decorative inventiveness focused on the pillars, door panels, lintels (torana), domical roofs in bays, 65 outer wall decorations such as kirtimukha (gargoyle faces common in Western Chalukya decoration), 66 and miniature towers on pilasters. Although the art form of these artisans does not have any distinguishing features from a distance, a closer examination reveals their taste for decoration. An exuberance of carvings, bands of scroll work, figural bas-reliefs and panel sculptures are all closely packed. The doorways are highly ornamented but have an architectural framework consisting of pilasters, a moulded lintel and a cornice top. The sanctum receives diffused light through pierced window screens flanking the doorway; these features were inherited and modified by the Hoysala builders. The outer wall decorations are well rendered. The Chalukyan artisans extended the surface of the wall by means of pilasters and half pilasters. Miniature decorative towers of multiple types are supported by these pilasters. These towers are of the dravida tiered type, and in the nagara style they were made in the latina (mono aedicule) and its variants; the bhumija and sekhari. 68

The Jain Temple at Lakkundi marked an important step in the development of Western Chalukya outer wall ornamentation, and in the Muktesvara Temple at Chavudayyadanapura the artisans introduced a double curved projecting eave (chhajja), used centuries later in Vijayanagara temples. The Kasivisvesvara Temple at Lakkundi embodies a more mature development of the Chalukyan architecture in which the tower has a fully expressed ascending line of niches. The artisans used northern style spires and expressed it in a modified dravida outline. Miniature towers of both dravida and nagara types are used as ornamentation on the walls. With further development, the divisions between storeys on the superstructure became less marked, until they almost lost their individuality. This development is exemplified in the Dodda Basappa Temple at Dambal, where the original dravida structure can only be identified after reading out the ornamental encrustation that covers the surface of each storey.

The walls of the *vimana* below the *dravida* superstructure are decorated with simple pilasters in low relief with boldly modeled sculptures between them. There are fully decorated surfaces with frequent recesses and projections with deeper niches and conventional sculptures. The decoration of the walls is subdued

compared to that of the later Hoysala architecture. The walls, which are broken up into hundreds of projections and recesses, produce a remarkable effect of light and shade,⁷¹ an artistic vocabulary inherited by the Hoysala builders in the decades that followed.

An important feature of Western Chalukya roof art is the use of domical ceilings and square ceilings. Both types of ceilings originate from the square formed in the ceiling by the four beams that rest on four pillars. The dome above the four central pillars is normally the most attractive. The dome is constructed of ring upon ring of stones, each horizontally bedded ring smaller than the one below. The top is closed by a single stone slab. The rings are not cemented but held in place by the immense weight of the roofing material above them pressing down on the haunches of the dome.⁷² The triangular spaces created when the dome springs from the centre of the square are filled with arabesques. In the case of square ceilings, the ceiling is divided into compartments with images of lotus rosettes or other images from Hindu mythology.⁷³

Pillars are a major part of Western Chalukya architecture and were produced in two main types: pillars with alternate square blocks and a sculptured cylindrical section with a plain square-block base, and bell-shaped lathe-turned pillars. The former type is more vigorous and stronger than the bell-shaped type, which is made of soapstone and has a quality of its own. Inventive workmanship was used on soapstone shafts, roughly carved into the required shapes using a lathe. Instead of laboriously rotating a shaft to obtain the final finish, workers added the final touches to an upright shaft by using sharp tools. Some pillars were left unpolished, as evidenced by the presence of fine grooves made by the pointed end of the tool. In other cases, polishing resulted in pillars with fine reflective properties such as the pillars in the temples at Bankapura, Itagi and Hangal.⁷⁴

Notable in Western Chalukya architecture are the decorative door panels that run along the length of the door and over on top to form a lintel. These decorations appear as bands of delicately chiseled fretwork, moulded colonettes and scrolls scribed with tiny figures. The bands are separated by deep narrow channels and grooves and run over the top of the door. The temple plan often included a heavy slanting cornice of double curvature, which projected outward from the roof of the

open mandapa. This was intended to reduce heat from the sun, blocking the harsh sunlight and preventing rainwater from pouring in between the pillars. The underside of the cornice looks like woodwork because of the rib-work. Occasionally, a straight slabbed cornice is seen.⁷⁶

Figural sculpture on friezes and panels changed during the period. The heroes from the Hindu epics Ramayana and Mahabharata, depicted often in early temples, become fewer, limited to only a few narrow friezes; there is a corresponding increase in the depiction of Hindu gods and goddesses in later temples. Depiction of deities above miniature towers in the recesses, with a decorative lintel above, is common in 12th-century temples, but not in later ones. Figures of holy men and dancing girls were normally sculpted for deep niches and recesses. The use of bracket figures depicting dancing girls became common on pillars under beams and cornices. Among animal sculptures, the elephant appears more often than the horse: its broad volumes offered fields for ornamentation. Erotic sculptures are rarely seen in Chalukyan temples; the Tripurantakesvara Temple at Balligavi is an exception. Here, erotic sculpture is limited to a narrow band of friezes that run around the exterior of the temple.

From the 11th century, architectural articulation included icons between pilasters, miniature towers supported by pilasters in the recesses of walls, and, on occasion, the use of wall pillars to support these towers.⁸¹ These miniature towers were of the southern *dravida* and northern *bhumija* and *sekhari* types and were mostly used to elaborate *dravida* types of articulation. The miniatures on single pilasters were decorated with a protective floral lintel on top, a form of decoration normally provided for depiction of gods.⁸² These elaborations are observed in the Amrtesvara Temple at Annigeri. These miniatures became common in the 12th century, and the influence of this northern articulation is seen in the Kasivisvesvara Temple at Lakkundi and in the nearby Nannesvara Temple.⁸³

The miniature towers bear finer and more elegant details, indicating that architectural ideas traveled fast from the north to the south.⁸⁴ Decoration and ornamentation had evolved from a moulded form to a chiseled form, the sharpness sometimes giving it a three-dimensional effect. The foliage decorations changed from bulky to thin, and a change in the miniature towers on dual pilasters is seen.

The 11th century miniatures consisted of a cornice (kapota), a floor (vyalamala), a balustrade (vedika) and a roof (kuta) with a voluptuous moulding, while in the 12th century, detailed dravidaminiature towers with many tiny tiers (tala) came into vogue. Some 12th century temples such as the Kallesvara Temple at Hirehadagalli have miniature towers that do not stand on pilasters but instead are supported by balconies, which have niches underneath that normally contain an image of a deity.

9. Kadamba architecture

Kadamba architecture was a style of temple architecture founded by Mayurasharma in the 4th century AD in Karnataka, India Kadambascreated new style of architecture which was the basis of the Hoysalas style of architecture, developed original school of sculpture, was the forerunner of series of South Indian sculptors. Many temples at Aihole, Badami and Hampi are built in Kadamba architectural style. During 345 AD to 525 AD, the ancient royal dynasty of Karnataka, the Kadambas made early contribution to the Architecture of Karnataka and they are the originators.

The most prominent feature of Kadamba architecture was Shikara called Kadamba Shikara. The tower rises in steps without any decoration (pyramid shaped shikara) with pinnacle (Stupika or Kalasha) on top. The Kadamba temples vimana usually square in plan, the tower is pyramidal shape and constitutes a series of horizontal step stages decorated with uniform series of quadrangular vertical projections and covering vestibules attached to vimana, The stages are more numerous and less elevated, devoid of pavilion ornamentation. Kadamba's architecture and sculpture contributed to the foundation of Chalukya-Hoysala style. Lakshmi Devi temple, Doddagaddavalli and Bhoo Varaha Laxmi Narasimha Temple Halasi are the Chalukya – Hoyasala style.

The 5th century monuments at Halasi are the oldest surviving Kadamba structure. The most prominent feature is the Kadamba *Shikara* with a *Kalasa* on top. In Belgaum district, Hattikeshwara, Kalleshwara and Someshwara temples at Halasi and group of temples at Kadaroli illustrates the Kadamba architecture. The old Jain *basadi* containing a sanctum and a *sukanasi* at Halasi the most ancient stone temple in Karnataka. Kadamba architecture constituted an important link between the Shatavahanas, Pallavas and Chalukyas architecture. Kadamba architecture elements

in Hoysala Architecture. Temples at Srisailam built during Vijayanagara empire (by Harihara Raya) has Kadamba Shikhara. Papanasi group of temples at Alampur in Andhra Pradesh are built in Kadamba style architecture. Chaya Someshwara temple at Panagal in Nalgonda.

The Kadamba temples are found at Degamve, Halsi, Gadag and Banavasi. The Kadamba pillars deserve consideration in Kadamba temples the square pillar predominates and nevertheless the round ones can also be seen. As in schools of architecture, the early pillars are plain, but soon ornamentation crept in there was a strange blend of the round and square pillars. The pillar was crowned with the lotus capital which now appeared like a closed wheel. The other square pillars more or less, less variations of this typical example in the Kamala Narayana temple at Degamve are seen.

Probably the earliest examples of this style are to be found in the remaining pillars of the ruined Kallamesvara temple at *Halsi*. This pillar reached its zenith of decoration in the Saraswati temple at *Gadag*, where the square pillar was almost encumbered completely with ornamentation. The round pillar can be seen in manya temples, namely in an old Kadamba shrine at Banawasi where the pillar had lost its *asvapadam* or the square pedestal while the complete structure with the lotus capital is intact, but nevertheless they are few. Sometimes the Kadambas utilized the full straight pillar but comparatively thinner ones as in the *Kadamba madapa* at Devagiri.⁸⁷

10. Kakatiya pillars

The Kakatiya temples are found at Warangal, Hanumakonda, Palampet and Ghanapur etc. The so-called thousand pillared temple at Hanumakonda in Warangal District was built by king Prataparudra. The most interesting part is the multipillared mandapa with about three hundred pillars, all are richly carved. This is attached to the front of the unit, Nandi mandapa. Another interesting feature of this ruined temple within the fort is the elaborate free standing toranas marking the entrances.

The temples at Palampet in Warangal district form another interesting group.

The ardhamandapa connects the vimana with a large navaranga in front, which is surrounded by a peripheral platform with an outer series of thirty two pillars and a

circumambulatory. The most note worthy feature is the array of brackets in the form of female figures, rising from the capitals of the pillars and spreading upto the beams and the cornice. Twelve of these are almost life-size figures of slender build and in graceful poses. The rest are rearing *vyalas*, their hind legs resting on elephant heads. The bases of the peripheral pillars of the *mandapa* are also connected by a *vedi* and a *balustrade* forming the lean-back of the *Kakshasana*.

The temple complex at Ghanapur has shorter peripheral pillars at the corners and on either side of each porch-entrance. These pillars, at Palampet, carry five caryatid brackets springing from the top cubical part of the shaft and reaching up to the corbel and cornice. The remaining Kakatiya temples are found at Panagal, Pillalamarri. The Palampet mandapa has four central pillars, which are highly finished and are decorative, lathe turned with basal and top cubical sections on the shaft and polygonal belt. The pillars in the mandapa of the great temple at Palampet and in the Hanumakonda are of black granite, lathe- turned and highly polished while in the other cases they are of sand stone.⁸⁸

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Chapter – IV Vijayanagara Pillars and their Decorative Motifs

CHAPTER - IV

VIJAYANAGARA PILLARS AND THEIR DECORATIVE MOTIFS

Chapter IV discusses the interior architectural and artistic treatment of the temples of Vijayanagara rulers. The most important and the significant parts in the interior of the temples are the pillars. A detailed study of these pillars would give an idea about the interior organization of the temples under the study.

The architecture of the Vijayanagara period may be studied under three headings — namely religious, civil and military. Temples built during the Vijayanagara period come under religious architecture, non-religious structures like the Lotus Mahal, Queen's Bath, Elephant stables at Hampi, the Gagan Mahal at Penukonda, the King's palace and the queen's palace at Chandragiri belong to the category of civil architecture. Forts, fortified towns built during the Vijayanagara period come under military architecture.

The Vijayanagara period started a new era of Hindu resurgence and throughout South India the religious institutions like the temples and mathas, which had been laid low by the Muslim advance and rule, were not only restored but given a new life by a series of rich gifts, lands, villages, gold, cash, jewels, cows etc., came pouring in and the donors were kings, queens, members of the royal family, generals, merchants and private individuals from all walks of life. Many new structures were added and the old ones repaired. This was a period when princely encouragement was given to art which is manifest from the external structural remains of the age. Most of the Vijayanagara monuments are, however, additions like prakaras, gopuras, mandapas and subsidiary shrines, made to temple complexes already existing. Good examples of temples built in their entirety during the Vijayanagara period are to be found at Hampi-Vijayanagara e.g., the Hazara Rama, Achyutaraya, Krishna and Vitthala temples and in several other places in the Rayalaseema, part of Andhra Pradesh. Temples built during the Vijayanagara period are well known for their size, details of decoration, sculpture and painting that they contain. A.L. Basham, referring to the Vijayanagara temples, rightly remarked "for brilliancy of decorative imagination, the Vijayanagara style of architecture was never surpassed in Hindu India". Pure Vijyanagara temples built in their entirety are found in the Rayalaseema area at places like Tadipatri, Lepakshi, Penukonda, Kadiri and Gorantla in the Anantapur District, Animela, Pusphagiri, Vontimitta, Gandikota and Rayachoti in the Kadapa District, Somapalem, Narayanavanam, Nagalapuram, Chandragiri and Mangapuram in the Chittoor District, Markapuram, Ahobilam and Srisailam in the Kurnool District. Vijayanagara Kings made structural additions like mandapas, prakaras and gopuras to the temples of earlier periods in many places in South India. Krishnadevaraya for instance built a good part of the northern tower at Chidambaram, one on the south side of the outer enclosure of the Ekambaranatha temple at Kanchipuram and another at Srikalahasti. The huge gopuras in the temples at places like Tiruvannamalai, Sriranagam, Rameswaram, Madurai and Srivilliputtur were also built during the Vijayanagara period. Many of the huge mandapas in the temples of South India were built in the Vijayanagara days. In Rayalaseema such additions, are found at places like Tirumala, Tirupati, Srikalahasti, Tiruchanur, Ahobilam and Srisailam. The temples of Tadipatri and Srisailam are famous for the sculptures of the Vijayanagara period. Smith, referring to the Tdipatri temples rightly remarked "The best examples of the Vijyanagara style are to be found, perhaps not at the capital, but at Tadipatri, Anatapur District,.... In gateways erected during the sixteenth century by a prince subordinate of Vijayanagara. Fergusson, who devoted two full page illustrations of the Tadipatri green stone sculptures, judges them to be on the whole, perhaps, in better taste than anything else in the style".

According to Saletore "The beginnings of the pillar structure in Vijayanagara itself are discoverable on the Matanga parvata which was well known from the reign of Bukka I as it was spot earlier than the empire itself". The Pillars here are simple. They have plain rectangular long blocks of granite. A crude piece of smaller stones were used for the capital.

Saletore further observes "soon this plain pillar began to take another shape which can be traced in the same pavilion on the Matanga paravata. There the pillars to the right were cut into Sadurams or square partitions in the middle and the distance between each saduram is now plain but later it was made octagonal.

Saletore also writes that the beginnings of Vijayanagara architecture can be traced in the Hemakuta Hill temple. He further adds that its pillars are almost plain with little or negligible ornamentation. This structure on the Hemakuta Hill is ascribed to about A.D.1346. Irugappa Dandanayaka, minister and general of Bukkaraya II (A.D.1399-1406) built the Sangita mandapa thirty one years after the establishment of the Vijayanagara empire Saletore has observed that "The pillars of this Sangita Mandapa are all uniformly plain in the typical early Vijyanagara style lacking all the elaborate finish and intricacy of detail and ornamentation found in the later Vijyanagara temples which can be traced in the Kalayanamandapas of the shrines at Vellore and the Varadaraja temple at Kanchi".

The central complement of four pillars of the Navaranga of the Hazara Rama temple are perhaps the best examples of the simplest type of pillars of the Vijayanagara period. They are heavy, made of schist and have three square blocks with short intervening octagonal sections without any supplemental shift. Each side of the square block, about two feet square has an exquisite carving of the repeated motif being Vishnu seated with Sridevi and Bhudevi beneath a torana crowned by simhalalata and form by pilasters. Venugopalakrishna, Rama and Anjaneya, cowherd, etc., are some other motifs.

The pillars on the pails on the eastern side of the flat gopura of the Hazara Rama temple at Hampi have two quadrangular blocks and a capital having a round flat member in the place of Kumbha, tadi, a wide phalaka with triangular drops at the four corners, a peculiar Chalukyan feature continued by the Kakatiyas and the Hoyasalas. The corbels show tenon-like projections in the middle recalling the old Chola corbels.

The outer mandapa in front of the Hazara Rama temple (the eight columned porch to the East according to Michels "is a 16th century extension" George Michell Architectural Traditions at Vijayanagara,) in Vijayanagara-city and Empire, Sttuttgart 1985-P.276). The mandapa has two rows of four pillars (about 18 feet high) having lotus corbels the bud beings connected with the base by a horizontal band (Pandyan feature). It is note worthy that the older Chola and Pandyan features of corbelling are continued in the Vijayanagara period.

Saletore further states that the round pillar was rarely used in Vijayanagara art because it was employed either with a square base or the square pillar itself. As a decorative pilaster (Kumbhapanjaram), the round pillar came to exist in the Hazara Rama temple at Vijayanagara. As noted earlier, the pedestal of this pilaster was square and above it rose the Kumbham (the pitcher or water pot) of the pillar itself. The rest of the Kumbhapanjaram was like any other pillar. However a somewhat round pillar can be seen in the kalyanamandapa at Vellore. The resemblance between this pillar and those at Mahabalipuram is too obvious to pass unnoticed. The base in the Vellore pillar were the double flowery corbels and the square pedestal. This round pillar is also found as the decorative pilaster on the Rajagopuram at Madurai. Finally, in the temples of Ikkeri the round pillar once more resumed its octagonal shape. A further development of square pillar was the double pillar first noticed in the Jambukesvara temple at Srirangam. Here is mixture of the Pandyan and Chola elements namely, the square and round pillars in one and both of them were united.

This paragraph gives us detailed information about pillars into five heads namely. The measurement of the pillars, their shapes, their ornaments and mouldings the collection of the wood or stone the purpose of making pillars and the ceremonial and process of erecting pillars. The height of a pillar is twice one and a half times or one and a quarter times that of its base, or the height of the pillar begins at 2½ hastas and ends & hastas. According to kasyapa the height of the pillar may be 1/6, 1/7, 1/8, 1/9 or 1/10 of its height, or 1/3, ¼ or 1/6 of the height if it be a pilaster (Kudy-stambha). The height of a pillar being divided into 12, 11, 10, 9 or 8 parts, the one of these parts may be the breadth of the pillar and at the top it is diminished by one-fourth.

The pillars are different shapes. A square pillar is called brahma-kanta. An octagonal one is called Vishnu-kanta. A sixteen-sided or circular one is known as rudra-kanta. A pentagonal one is called sivakanta, and the hexagonal one skanda-kanta. These shapes are stated to be uniform from bottom to top. But the base may be quadrangular. With respect to dimensions and ornaments the five kinds of columns – brahma-kanta, Vishnu-kanta, Rudra-kanta, Siva-kanta and Skanda-kanta, are called Chitra-kanta, Padma-kanta, Chitra-kumbha, palika-stabha in the later

division, is stated to be two sided, and is the same as the kudya-stambha or pilaster. Some special kinds of pillars are also described, such as chitr-kuta, padma-kanta, Chitra-kumbha, vira-kunta, palika-stambha, Kumbha-stambha and Koshta-stambha. Some monor pillars should be proportionate to the main pillar. A main pillar with one minor pillar (upapada) is called eka-kanta; with two minor pillars dvi-kanta, and with three minor pillars tri kanta. A minor pillar with four minor pillars is called brahma-kanta, with five siva-kanta and with eight minor pillars, it is called Vishnu-kanta.

Temple architecture during the Vijayanagara period reached its final stage of evolution. The temple building activity was given importance by the rulers as well as their subordinates. The Rayalaseema region is witnessed tremendous expansion of religious architecture during the Vijayanagara period. The Vijayanagara temples are found in the Rayalaseema area in places like Gorantla, Kadiri, Lepakshi and Penugonda in the Anantapur District; Chandragiri, Mangapuram, Nagalapuram, Narayanavanam and Somapalem in Chittoor District; Pushpagiri and Rayachoti in Kadapa district; Srisailam and Ahobilam in Kurnool district. In those temples, efflorescence in ornamental designs is clearly visible.

Vijayanagara temples of Rayalaseema are peculiar both in their general plan and some important details. The pillars are the principal component parts of the temple interior. They play a prominent and pleasing part in many pillared mandapas. The Natyamandapa, Kalyana mandapa, Mukhamandapa, etc. of the temples have a variety of pillars. They are square, rectangular, fluted and composite pillars. It may be stated that the free standing pillars, found infront of the Vijayanagara temples are taken into consideration. According to Percy Brown, the proportion of the various architectural parts of the temple unit mainly revolves around the height of the shaft of the pillar which in its turn depends upon the length of the stone that was economically possible to extract from the quarry.³

Besides, the pillars give not only depth to the interior of the temple itself, but also provide an ample scope and space for the sculptors to carve various designs and motifs on these pillars. The plan, size, shape and the beauty of temples depend very much upon the inter-columniation of the pillars which the Vijayanagara temples display a bewildering variety of pillars. The pillars called "Stambha" is notable for

its punctuates the interior of the *mandapa* supporting roof. Its forms are too many in the Vijayanagara temples. The Vijayanagara pillars are of six varieties. They are:

- 1. Pillars with square shaft throughout
- 2. Pillar with one rectangular part and two square parts with octagonal intervening portions.
- 3. Pillar with an asvapadam (foot of the pillar) and the square parts and two polygonal shafts with octagonal belt.
- 4. Pillar with an asvapadam, one rectangular part two square parts and two polygonal shafts with three octagonal belts.
- 5. Pillar with an asvapadam, one rectangular part and polygonal shaft and
- 6. Pillar with yali bracket (Yalistambha).4

The Vijayanagara architects interested in the square shaped pillars which they adopted from the Chola architects. The first variety of Vijayanagara pillar is seen in the early Chalukyan architecture in the Durga temple at Aihole, which was built in the first half of the seventh Centure A.D.5 An example of this variety is found in the natyamandapa of the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi (Pl-7) in Anantapur District. It is square in shape and design. It has a base shaft and four square brackets all are independent segments. The base is adorned with two plain pattikas and gala in between them. A central square block connecting the pattikas is found on all the facing sides of the base. The shaft has three square blocks intervened by two octagonal sections. The top corner edges of the lower square member are decorated with cyma reverse termination. The octagonal sections not only have vertical flutes but also horizontal octagonal bands. Beautiful sculptures are carved on all the four sides of the square blocks. The shaft is surrounded by a bracket having Chola corbels. The pillar is nearly sixteen feet in height, pleasing proportionate and has graceful appearance. The most interesting feature of this pillar is the shaft decorated with Stambhika - Prasada motif. The second, third, fourth and fifth varieties of Vijayanagara pillars follow the Chola variety i.e. pillar with an asvapadam (Pl-8)(Foot of the pillar), two rectangular parts, one square part and two octagonal intervening portions. The Chola pillar design has been transformed into the most elegant one by the Vijayanagara sculptor by introducing decorative motif

and designs. The bottom square or rectangular part of the Vijayanagara pillars came to possess a leaf-like ornament known as Nagabandham.⁶ Which is seen in the Vijayanagara pillars at Kalavagunta, Kapilatirtham, Tirupati, Puthalapattu, Tiruchanur, etc. On the four corners of the bottom square or rectangular part of the pillar, the nagabandham or snake-hood moulding is shown peeping out. It is observed that this moulding which prevailed in Vijayanagara art for a long time, was almost an innovation of Vijayanagara school of art. The sixth variety i.e. vali stambhika (Pillar with Yali Bracket) is an original form of the Vijayanagara Craftsmen. In this variety there is square shaped pillar having sculptural carvings on the three square parts. But what is remarkable is the adjoining column (animal bracket) on which the sculptures carved are as varied as marvelous. There is finest figure of an elephant, on which standing the figure of a rearing yali. Higher up, we see a human figure in a loaded posture with one hand softed up and shown, as though supporting the weight at the top. Over this is an ornamental potika crowning the whole. This is the most highly ornamental pillar in the Vijayanagar style and the amount of labour and cost involved in its construction should really be enormous.7

In the Vijayanagara temples of Rayalaseema region, the pillars have been highly ornamented. Other structures like the out *prakaras* and shrine walls bear very little ornamentation. The faces of square and rectangular parts are utilized for sculptural work which includes squatting lions, dancing girls, scroll designs and scenes from *Bhagavata* and *Ramayana*. Comparing these *Ramayana* and *Bhagavata* scenes with the sculptures of Hoyasalas, we find that the Vijayanagara sculptural art was profoundly influenced by the school of Hoyalasa Art.

There is an appreciable variety among the pillars found in the Vijayanagara temples in regard to their shapes. Some of the pillars found in the Madhavarayaswami temple at Gorantla in the Hindupur Taluk of Anantapur District. It was built in 1354 A.D. by Saluva Narasimha. There is a narrow vedi along the edges of the mahamandapa (Pl-9) on which stands pillars supporting the roof. On this vedi are found four pillars in the east, three in the south and three in the north. There are four pillars in the centre of the mandapa. There is a pillar on either side of the entrance of the mahamandapa. Out of ten pillars on the vedi, six are of the following description; rectangular part recess with a hexagonal band, square part,

padmabandha, tadi, kumbha, idal and expanded phalaka. The capitals of the pillars are in the typical Vijayanagara style. There are four pillars, one on either side of the entrance in the east and in the north. They are peculiar each pillar has an elephant at the base standing with the trunk hanging in front. On the back of the elephant stands a lion with its forelegs raised up and mouth wide open. In the remaining part of the pillar from the above head of the lion are the padmabandha, tadi, kumbha, idal and expanded phalaka. The capitals are similar to those of the other pillars. The elephants, which forms the base is one foot eight inches in length, one foot six inches in breadth and one foot in height. The height of the lion which substitutes the shaft of the pillar is three feet two inches. The phalaka is two feet six inches each side. The cornice above the pillars of the mahamandapa has a concave upper portion and a convex lower portion. There is a narrow parapet plastered all over and all along the edge of the root of the mandapa.

Another type of pillar is one with shaft polygonal. Then there is the round pillar with typical Chola capital, as in the case of these found in the *pradakashina* of temple no.VII in the Chandragiri Fort of Chittoor District. There is the pillar whose shaft is decorated with rows of *kutas* and *salas* all over. Examples of this type are found in the verandah before the shrine of the Alvars in the Govindaraja Temple of Tirupati. The fort of Chandragiri (Pl-10) and its neighbourhood contain seven temples, big or small belonging to the Vijayanagara period. Pillars with pillarets, ranging from one to eight, projecting from the main shaft are found in large numbers in the Vijayanagara temples.

The curved pillars with yali bracket is one more type. This type is found in the kalyanamandapa of the Govindarajaswami temple of Tirupati. It is situated at the south-eastern corner of the inner courtyard. It is a rectangular structure facing the east and consisting of a pillared hall, a pavilion and a shrine. The mandapa consists of fifty seven pillars which are of the following type a) pillar with yali brackets without rider b) curved pillar with two yali brackets one by the side of the other without riders. c) Curved pillar with two yali brackets one by the side of the other with riders. d) Pillar with one pillared projections. e) Pillar with three pillarets projecting and f) Pillar decorated with kuta, Sala, kuta and sala designs all over the shaft. In the interior of the hall there is wide prastara or entablature above the

capitals of these pillars. It is decorated from bottom to top with the members like two pattas, kumuda, three pattas, gala, patta and gala. 10

Pillar with a pillaret projecting with a figure at the base of the pillaret is another example of this type, found in the pavilion of the kalyanamandapa (Pl-11) of the Chennakesava Temple at Somapalem and the Lakshminarasimha Temple of Kadiri. In the Chennakesava Temple is located a pavilion containing four pillars, one in each of the four corners is found. The first pillar from the east in the row touching the south compound wall contains three rectangular compartments, one above the other, with a sculpture in each and roll capital with two dwarf figures on it shown as supporting the roof. The second pillar from the east in the same row has, at its base, a women chauri bearer (Pl-12) and roll and dwarf capital. The third pillar in the same row has, at its base, a woman chowri bearer, kumbha panjara with a rampant lion on either side and the roll and dwarf capital. The first pillar from the south in the row built into the front walls of the three small shrines has three rectangular compartments one above the other with a deity sculpture inside each and the roll and dwarf capital. The second pillar has, at the base, a woman in dance pose and a kumbhapanjara on the shaft and the roll and dwarf capital. The third pillar has a woman playing on vina and kumbhapanjara and the roll and leaf capital. The fourth pillar in the row contains a dwarf figure at its base and the shaft containing three rectangular compartments each with a deity sculpture and the roll and the dwarf capital. The first pillar from the west in the row which is at the northern edge has four sides, each side divided into six vertical compartments, each containing a deity sculpture and roll capital. The second pillar from the west in the same row is similar to the first one and contains the deity sculptures. The third pillar in the row is four sided, each side having four vertical compartments and each compartment containing a deity sculpture. The two pillars in the front have each the shaft decorated with rows of salas and roll capital. The temple was built in 16th century A.D. of excellent workmanship especially the kalyanamandapa and mahamandapa which have typical Vijayanagara Pillars.

The kalyanamandapa of Lakshminarasimhaswami temple at Kadiri in the Anantapur district is situated to the south west of the main shrine and faces the east. It is in two sections, the front part at a lower level and the hind part at a higher level.

The front part contains a row of six pillars with Chola capitals. The elevated part is reached by a flight of steps flanked by elephants and contains two rows of six pillars each with Chola capitals. There is a pavilion at the extreme west, formed by three rows of four pillars each with Chola capitals.

In the Virabhadra Temple of Lepakshi, there is a pillar with a big deity carved on its shaft. This temple is renowned for its *mahamandapa* which has exquisitely carved pillars with life-size figures of Tumburu, Dattatreya (Pl-13), Brahma (Pl-14), Narada, Rambha, Padmini (Pl-15), Nataraja, etc. The pillars are massive with single or multiple pillarets and have *pushpapotikas*.

The Venkataramana Temple at Tadipatri, Anantapur District belongs to early 16th Century A.D. Its ornate mahamandapa (Pl-16) has massive pillars in the inner columnation. The pillars with three arms containing a pillarette; the pillar with one arm having a pillarette; the pillar with vyala rider on the shaft and kudyastambhas. Especially the pillars on the exterior are alternatively decorated with apsara figures on the shaft.¹¹

The capitals of the pillars and pillarets in these temples show an appreciable variety. In the early Vijayanagara period, the capital underwent a change and came to have a semi-circular hanging below the elephant trunk-shaped arms of the capitals. The pure Chola capital with sides cut to 45° and with protruding blocks on sides is found in some pilasters and pillars. Examples of such pillars are in the circumambulatory of temple no: VII in the Chandragiri fort; in the mandapa before the second gopura of the Kalyana Venkateswara temple of Narayanavanam and in the mandapa of the first gopura of the Virabhadra temple of Lepakshi. Chola capital without the protruding blocks on either side at the bottom is found in some cases. Subsequently in the middle Vijayanagara period, the semi-circle developed into an angle at the centre resembling a pushpapotika or a small lotus bud, which became characteristic of the Vijanayagara style. 12 Examples are the pilasters found on the walls of the Siva (Pl-17) and Rama (Pl-18) temples of Penukonda of Anantapur District. Pillars and pilasters having the potika in the developed stage with a tendency to develop an angular bottom are found in the Umamaheswara temple at Srisailam, the Ramalingeswara and Venkataramana Temples of Tadipatri of Anantapur district. Capital where the arms assumed the shape of the triple lotus with

the pointed potika in the centre found in the pillars of the pavilion of the kalyanamandapa of the Somapalem temple is yet another type. In some cases there is a horizontal bar connecting the free tip of the capital with the main block. Capital with the more roll model is found in the Chennakesava temple of Somapalem. Roll capital with a patta on it is found in the kalyanamandapa of the Venkataramana temple at Tadipatri and also on the pilasters (PI-19) found in the adhishtana of the gopura in the same temple. Roll capital with the figure of one or two dwarfs on the patta is found in the pillars of the Kalyanamandapa in the Somapalem temple. Roll capital with the head of serpent on it is found on the pilasters and on the walls of the mukhamandapa in the Mallikarjuna temple at Srisailam of Kurnool District. 13

The Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi, the Venkataramana temple and the Ramalingeswara Temples of Tadipatri contain pillared corridors on the inner side of the prakara wall. There are differences in the plan, shape and arrangement of pillars of the mahamandapa. The mahamandapa in the Venkataramana temple of Tadipatri contains a platform on Vedi on three sides and the front wall of the mukhamandapa with a dvara on the fourth side. There is a depression or pit inside surrounded by these vedis. On this vedi are found pillars supporting the roof above. The Mahamandapas found in the Lakshminarasimha Temple of Kadiri, Kalyanavenkateswara temple of Narayanavanam, temple, No.III in the Chandragiri fort are level with the ground and donot have Adhishtanas. The Mahamandapa in the Madhavaraya temple of Gorantla is square and has a vedi with pillars above it all along its edge. The mahamandapa in the Govindaraja temple of Tirupati is in two sections one at a lower level and the other at a higher level. The Mahamandapa in the Kalyanavenkateswara Temple of Mangapuram stands on a very high adhishtana. 14

During the Vijayanagara period many pillared halls known as the hundred and thousand pillared mandapas were added to the existing temples at Srirangam, Kanchipuram, Tiruvannamalai and Madurai. In the temples under study the Kalahastiswara temple at Kalahasti of Chittoor District is the only temple with a hundred pillared mandapa. Kalyanamandapas are the marriage halls where the marriage of the main deity and his consort are celebrated occasionally. Such type of pillared mandapas are found in several temples like the Govindaraja temple of

Tirupati, the Chennakesava temple of Somapalem, the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lekpakshi, the Ramalingeswara and Venkataramana temples of Tadipatri. Unjalmandapas, used during the occasions of swing festivals are found in the Govindaraja temple of Tirupati, Virabhadrasvami temple of Lepakshi, Lakshminarasimha temple at Kadiri and the Venkateswra temple at Tirumala. There are examples of pillars with brackets containing deity figures. In the Vijayanagara architecture, we find the brackets containing the figures of lion and elephant (vali) with a rider or without. The inspiration for this vali bracket which is found prominently in the Vijayanagara architecture seems to have been derived from the Kakatiya style. It is a new feature not noticed before. All these varieties are to be found only in the Vijayanagara temples of the Rayalaseema area. Roll and patta capital is also found in the pillars of the south porch of the mukhamandapa of Hazara Rama temple at Hampi. Roll and patta capital with a deity figure on the patta is found in the pillars of the south porch of the mukhamandapa of the Vittal temple at Hampi.

Monolithic Dipastambha (Pl-20) is found in front of the Chennakesava temple of Somapalem in the Mulakalacheruvu mandal of the Chittoor District, the Venkataramana temple of Tadipatri (Pl-21), Anantapur District and the Virabhadra temple of Rayachoti of the Kadapa District. Dipastambha of Somapalem is about sixty feet high and stands on a high platform consisting of the adhishtana (Pl-22) in two sections. The lower section contains from bottom upwards — upana. patta — Padma, gala, containing dance sculptures and cornice decorated with lotus petal design and simhalalata gables. The upper section contains from bottom upwards — patta decorated with figures of dwarfs and two stroreyed miniature shrines, gala, tripatta with a projection in the centre decorated with lotus flower designs and dwarfs, gala and patta with figures at intervals.

The pillar is four-sided and tapers upwards. At the bottom of the pillar is the figure of garuda standing with his hands in Anjali. Above it is a man riding a lion. There is a man standing in the catura pose with the right hand holding vina and the left bent at the elbow and upraised on the north face of the pillar. Above that figure is a woman standing on a makara. The east face of the pillar has at its bottom a man in a comic pose and above that a rider on a lion. On the south face of the pillar at the

bottom, there is a woman holding *chamara* in the upraised right hand and above it is a woman riding a lion. There is lotus creeper design going up to the top on the four sides. On the top of the pillar is a brick-built *kuta*. 15

Similar type of brick – built *kuta* is also noticed at Virabhadra temple of Rayachoti. Another *dipastambha* at *Venkataramana* temple at Tadipatri is set upon a *vedi* with its top portion fallen.

There are examples of pillars with brackets containing lay or deity figures. The earliest examples are noticed at Sanchi, Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda. In the early Chalukyan architecture, the Durga temple, Lad-Khan and Konti-Gudi at Aihole and the caves of Badami, there are pillars with brackets having deity figures. In the Kakatiya architecture, as at Palampet and Ghanapur, there are brackets containing the figures of lion and elephant and with beautiful women in attractive dance poses.¹⁶

In the Tripurantakesvara temple at Tripurantakam of Kurnool District, there are pillars with brackets containing the figures of lion and elephant.¹⁷ In the Hoyasala architecture, there are pillars with *madanika* brackets. In the Vijayanagara architecture, we find the bracket containing the figure of lion and elephant (*vali*) (P1-23) with or without a rider on it. The inspiration for this *yali* bracket which is found prominently in the Vijayanagara architecture seems to have been derived from the Kakatiya style. This is also a new feature not noticed before.

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Chapter – V Ornamentation or Art Motifs





CHAPTER – V ORNAMENTATION OR ART MOTIFS

The decorative devices are primarily meant for the beautification of the temple structures during Vijayanagara period. These include floral designs, natural scenery, animals and birds, kirtimukhas or simhalalatas, human figures, figures in erotic poses, and semi-divine beings like gandharvas, nagas, yaksas and kinnaras. These decorative motifs enable us to measure not only the aesthetic sense and the artistic skill of the sculptors but also the cultural makeup of the people who lived in a particular age and region respectively. The Indian sculptors – Buddhist, Jain and Hindu employed a bewildering variety of art. motifs viz flora-fauna, human, geometrical, mythical, etc. One important division of sculpture that deserves consideration is that of decorative motifs. In the following pages some of the important art-motifs employed by the Vijayanagara sculptors and others in the said region are discussed.

Flora and Fauna:

During the vijayanagara period the sculptors had taken special interest in the representation of flora and fauna varieties of floral designs and lineal carvings are found on the pattas of the adhishtanas, on the shafts of the pillars, pilasters, on the kambhapanjaras, and on the ceilings. There are exquisite finial carvings and floral designs among them. The walls of the north and south gopuras (Pl-24) of the Ramalingesvara temple at Tadipatri of Anantapur district contain fine floral designs and creeper decoration on the ceilings. They are designs in the pattern of wide open lotus flowers. The gopura of Chennakesava temple at Pushpagiri of Kadapa district is decorated with the figure of a woman standing under a creeper in a graceful pose.1 The north face of the pillar at Chennakesava temple in Somapalem of Chittoor district has from bottom upwards, Kumbhapanjara and man riding a lion. The pillar in the west has the figure of a woman standing. She has two hands and holds a flower in the left hand and keeps the right hand hanging. There is a stone vedi in the centre of the pavilion. It is decorated from bottom upwards upana, creeper design. adhah-padma, gala, patta with lotuses, another gala and alinga pattika. The ceiling of the pavilion is richly carved with floral designs and dancers2 (Pl-25). Here, the

pillar has lotus creeper design on the shaft. The ceiling above the four pillars of the mukhamandapa has the double square design with a lotus in the centre. There is a vaishnava - dvarapalika on either side of the entrance of antarala. Above the dvarapalaka image is the creeper design, diamond design and lotus petal decoration. The lintel has a lotus with a creeper on each side. Floral designs, floral scrolls, lotus medallions and Purnakumbhas are found on the pillars of the mandapas, kalyana mandapas, hundred pillared halls and other mandapas and also on the pilasters, adhishtanas of the gopuras in the Srikalahastisvara temple. The adhistana of the front section has an upana, patta, another patta with floral and geometrical designs. These are followed by a prominent mahapadma moulding, which is in turn followed by a wide gala, divided into rectangular compartments by using miniature pilaster bearing floral designs. From the ground level, the members of the adhishtana are: a narrow patta with creeper designs followed by a gala containing horses with or without riders, narrow gala, tripatta - kumuda ornamented with floral and geometrical patterns, a gala cut into compartments, projecting patta decorated with lotus petals as well as floral designs. The upper protion of the dvara of the gopura is beautiful with dwarf motifs and also lotus designs. The capitals of the pillars have lotus corbels. The ceiling portion of the dvara is decorated with lotus medallions.

The sculptures of animals and birds appear in various parts of temples. They are introduced in their appropriate places either as vehicle of particular gods and goddesses and in a few cases independently for the sake of their decorative value. A large variety of animals and birds viz elephants (Pl-26), lions, deer, cows, bulls, monkeys, doves, parrots, etc. are sculptured on the pillars on exterior walls and on the prakara walls. According to A.Gopala Rao "In the style of Vijayanagara, freedom and abandon is seen among the forms of animals, sculptured on the pillars of the kalyana-mandapa, the mukha mandapas and on the walls of the ardhamandapas. Elephants, deer, monkeys and many other forms make their appearance, and live, play, fresh and gambol on the faces of the shafts of pillars and walls. They are done in low-relief and show the qualities of painting and appear as if sculptors simply chiseled away chips of stone to discover the forms imprisoned in the rock. Though none of them may be considered as a master piece, they are good sculptures and cannot be neglected by a student of art. The forms of birds are all stylised and done in low relief.³

Figures of yalis appear in great number in the temples. Yali (PI-27) is the compound of the lion and the elephant and is believed to symbolize the sacred river Ganges. Yali is the combination of a lion in the rearing pose with its trunk entwined with that of an elephant seated at its feet. The lion is shown at the base of the pillarets and as the vahana of goddess Durga or Mahishasuramardani. Most of the temples of Rayalaseema, there is a phalaka containing lions in the four corners. Figures of elephant are found frequently in different parts of temples. A long row of elephants are shown above the friezes of the "Siriyala and Kiratarjuna" stories in the Virabhadra temple of Lepakshi and Chennakesava temple at Pushpagiri. The adhishtana of this temple mandapa contains from bottom upwards upana, patta, Padma, broad sala with the figures of elephants and cornice containing simhalalata gables.

Horses are shown on the *prakara* walls of the Mallikarjuna temple at Srisailam (Pl-28) of Kurnool District and on a *patta* of *Adhishtana* of the Umamaheswara temples at Pushpagiri, Kadapa district. Cows are shown usually in the scenes representing Krishna's *lilas* like lifting of Govardhana and playing on the flute. The bull, however, is the most favourite animal appearing in the *saiva* shrines. The bull laying in the characteristic pose before Siva is found in several temples.

The horses are also shown at Srikalahastiswara temple on the pattas of the adhishtanas. The Nandi (Pl-29) of Lepakshi is famous for its size and excellence of execution. It is situated a few meters from the temple and it is considered to be the biggest in India. The bull is depicted in the characteristic pose of nandi is noticeable. However, the head is held aloft at a higher angle than is usual, consequently the expression of submission which is typical of nandi before Siva, is conspicuous by its absence here. From the stand point of the proper proportion in the formation of the various limbs and the excellent finish secured in the workmanship, the Lepakshi Nandi is a good piece of art of the Vijayanagara period. The buffalo is depicted as the vahana of Yama, the god of death. The monkey is shown in several places on the north and south gopuras of the Ramalingeswara temple (Pl-30) at Tadipatri of Anantapur District. The dog is usually shown as the vahana of Bhairava and also in some Bhiksatanamurti sculptures. It is surprising to see Ganapati, noted for the enormous proportions of his physical form, is seen with the tender mouse as his

vehicle (Srikalahastisvara Temple). The deer appears very frequently in sculpture. In most cases, Siva is shown as holding the deer in one of his four hands. It is also shown as accompanying Siva in his Biksatanamurthi form, the snake by virtue of its association with some of the gods of the Hindu pantheon cannot be missed in the sculptures of the Vijayanagara temples. It is shown sometimes in one of the hands of Siva, Durga and Kumara. It also appears as an ornament on the body of Siva and also as an ear ornament. A gigantic serpent is carved in stone in the Virabhadra temple (Pl-31) at Lepakshi; with its majestic hood sewing as a canopy for the linga of Siva. On the north face of the boulder is a big stone image of Ganapati seated. Birds too, occur in their appropriate places as vahanas of certain gods. The elegance of the pose of the peacock as also the grace of its wings spread fan-wise are charming. Figures of swans (Pl-32) are carved with great skill below the panels representing the stories of Kiratarjuniya and Siriyala in the Virabhadra temple of Lepakshi and also on the north and south gopuras of Ramalingeswara temple of Tadipatri. Parrots (Pl-33) are found on the foliages of the kumbhapanjaras, on the walls of the north and south gopuras of the Ramalingesvara temple at Tadipatri.6

Human Figures:

A large number of sculptures of human figures are found in Vijayanagara temples. There appear a good number of sculptures of sages and Saiva devotees like Kannappanayanar, Markandeya, Siriyala and Mrigavyala. The female figures are carefully carved in these temples. The Silpa-Prakasa states that any house without wife as play without woman and also without the figure of woman the monument will be of inferior quality and bear no fruit. Female figures in Vijayanagara temples represented in different postures and in different places. The beautiful female (Pl-34) figures standing in cross-legged postures are found on the lower sections of the gopura-dvaras. They normally stand on a mythical makara and canopied by an exquisitely carved meandering floral creeper. Examples of this type are found at Tirupati, Srikalahasti, Somapalem, Lepakshi, Tadipatri, etc. She holds the floral creeper in one hand and the other kept in katyavalambita. The modern art critiques describe this motif as the woman with creeper falling over her. But this really represents the ancient Dohada motif or "the lady and the tree" motif. This is one of the oldest and the most frequently used as decorative motif in the Indian art. This

motif was first used by the Buddhist artists. The Salabhanjikas of the Sanchi toranas are one of the earliest examples of the lady and tree motif in the Indian art. The lady and the tree motif which has a symbolic significance of fertility was represented by the Buddhist and Jain sculptors with a touch of reality. But the Brahmanical sculptors who inherited it from them depicted it purely as an ornamented motif without paying any attention to the underlying element of fertility. It is this spirit that is reflected in the lady and the free motif of the Vijayanagara period. In this case the lady is literally relegated to a position of a female dvarapala at the base of the door-jambs of the gopura-dvaras. The Vijayanagara sculptors took keen interest in the representation of the lady at toilet. An excellent example of this type is found on one of the pillars of the Kalyana-Mandapas of the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi (Pl-35). In this relief a beautiful lady is shown seated in a leisurely manner. She is holding a round mirror in her left hand and with the other hand she is trying to place a beauty marks on the centre of her fore-head. Her wide opened eyes and the slowly slipping mantle of her sari uncovering her breasts clearly indicate that the lady has simply forgotten this world and totally concentrated her attention in applying the beauty mark on her fore-head. The Vijayanagara sculptors profusely used this motif for the decoration of the interior and exterior walls and pillars of the temples. Beautifully modeled, charmingly decorated and pleasingly poised female figures are used by the Vijayanagara sculptors as stambha Puttalikas and dvarapalikas. Such pillars are used for supporting the roof of the mukha-mandapa of the Devi Shrine in the Venkataramana temple at Tadipatri. The Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi (Pl-36) and the Chennakesava temple at Somapalem are adorned with female statues of reactive grace and charm. They are arranged in groups on the shaft of the pillar in the Venkatramana temple. They are shown standing in Sanapadasthanaka posture and holding either vinas or purnakalasas. The women shown as accompanying Siva in his Bikastanamurti are certainly master pieces of Vijayanagara times. Particularly pleasing figures of women are found in the Lepakshi and Pushpagiri temples. The attenuated waist, prominent bust, thick set arms and legs, draperies of diaphanous material and the hair styles of the woman in the sculptures of the Vijayanagara period certainly are enchanting. 10 Similar female figures are found serving the purpose of Dvarapalikas on either side of the doorways of the minor shrines in the Chennakesava temple at Somapalem. These figures

give us an idea to measure the Vijayanagara sculptors, mastery over feminine anatomy and form. They are the main examples for citing the classical trend of the Vijayanagara art.

Kirtimukhas or Simhalalatas:

The kirtimukha represents the grotesque head of a lion sometimes with a human face or a dancing figure inside and sometimes with pearls dropping down from its mouth. The Kirtimukha or the head of the lion with pearls dropping from its mouth is considered to be symbolical representation of the builders which is figuratively taken to be as white as pearls. Typical examples of Kirtimukhas with pearls dropping down from their mouths are those found on the cornice above the walls of the main shrine in the Venkataraman temple of Tadipatri and the pillars of the Kalyanamandapa at Lepakshi (Pl-37). Its final development is noticed on the exterior of the Vijayanagara temples at Pushpagiri, Hampi, etc. Simhalalata gables with human heads and figures in dance poses occur inside the temples of Rama and Siva at Penukonda. The kapota above the wall contains simhalalata gables in the Kodandaramaswami temple at Chandragiri. The Simhalalata gable depicted in Srikalahasti temple has the toes of the legs and the furies of hands have long and sharp nails. It is always shown without directed name, arranged in the form of a circle round the head, bulging eyes, and gaping mouth, protruding tongue and at times with a long and served tail. In some cases its genital organ is also shown prominently. This fantastic mythical monster is represented on the pedestals of the pillars, adhishtanas, of the mandapas and shrines on the copical mouldings of the pillars and on either side of the door-ways.

Dwarfs:

The impish dwarfs (Pl-38) are used as monumental decorative devices in the temples. They are one of the most significant and frequently used decorative devices in the Vijayanagara art. They are found in different positions in different places. It is observed that the Vijayanagara sculptors represented them on the upper edge of the massive and curved comices of the mukha-mandapas; on the kapota which is placed on the top of the prasada walls and below the vimana, on the upapithas and adhishtanas of the gopura-dvaras and natyamandapas, projected comice of the shrine doorways, lower section of the kumbha-panjaras, pedastals of the sculptures;

prastaras of the gopura-dvaras, brackets of the pillars etc. In most of the cases they are shown seated and in the act of carrying weight with the head, and with the shoulders or with their upraised hands. It is also shown that in some cases they are represented either sitting or standing or dancing. On the pedestals of the images they are carved as miniature figures. They are normally represented with scanty dress, pot like prominent bellies, bulging eyes and adorned with udara-bandhas, ekaval's wristlets, ankelets, short turbans, etc. In some instances they are shown with a pair of tusks on either extreme ends of the mouth. It is very interesting to note that in some cases they are represented with pleasing anatomical features and even adorned with kiritamakutas. Examples of this type are found on the adhishtana of the natyamandapa of the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi and on the pillars at Srisailam. The dwarf figures that are sculptured on the adhishtana of the natya-mandapa of the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi are very interesting. The physiognomy of these figuresare extremely pleasing. They are adorned with kiritamakutas, keyuras, wristlets, anklets, yajnopavitas, skandamalas and exquisitely designed necklaces. The most important and remarkable feature of these figures is that of the representation of udaramukhas. Sculptures of this type are very rarely found in the other Vijayanagara temples. The Vijayanagara sculptors inherited the tradition of using the impish dwarfs (Pl-39) as decorative devices either from the Pallavas or from the Cholas, The Vijayanagara sculptors represented them with corpulent bodies but in some cases they are shown with pleasing anatomical features and even adorned with kiritamakutas. These types are found on the adhishtana of the natyamandapa (Pl-40) of the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi and Srikalahastiswara temple at Kalahasti.

Makaratorana:

The Makara-torana is another decorative and important motif found in the Vijayanagara temples. The Vijayanagara sculptors used this motif or device very sparingly. This is carved as a canopy of the cult images sculptured on the pillars and on the exterior walls. Examples of this type are found on the pillars of the Natyamandapa and kalyana mandapa of the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi, on the exterior walls of the temples at Pushpagiri of Kadapa district and Srikalahasteswara temple at Kalahasti. The arch of Srikalahasteswara temple is

composed of multi-stringed plural bands. The top portion either left blank or is occupied by a boldly designed kirtimukha motif or a floral design. Generally multiple floral strings are shown flowing out freely from the mouth of kirtimukha. The makaras are carved below on either sides of the floral arch. The upraised trunks of the makaras are shown touching the floral scrolls shown above. The top of the gods and goddess figures in the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi has two kinds of makara-toranas. In all these cases it looks like a triforium arch.

This arch is composed of multi-stringed floral bands. The top portion is occupied by a boldly designed kirtimukha motif. Seated makaras with upraised trunks are shown on either side basal terminations of the torana. In the first type makara heads are shown whereas in the second type makaras with riders are representing. The makara-torana examples are found on the exterior walls of Chennakesava temple at Pushpagiri, represented a refined variety. In these examples the torana is canopied by a prominent kirtimukha motif. Multiple floral strings are shown flowing freely from the mouth of the kirtimukha. Makaras with riders are sculptured on either side at the bottom of the floral arch. The upraised trunks of the makaras are shown touching the floral scrolls shown above. The plumage and the raised trunks of the makaras and the riders who are shown comfortably mounted on the back of the makaras are pleasingly delineated. A deep, circular and empty cavity is shown in the centre of the torana. It is observed that the Vijayanagara sculptors used the makara-toranas to decorate the door way lintels and the front side of the mahanasikas of the vimanas. The makara-torana which was introduced by the Buddhist and Jaina sculptors gradually crept into the realism of Hindu art. In Deccan region the makara-torana was also used by the early Chalukyas. One of the best examples of this motif is found in the Virupaksha temple at Pattadakal.11 But the arch of the torana is semi-circular in shape in the Vijayanagara temples.

Wall Decorations:

The architects of the Vijayanagara period bestowed great attention on the adhishtanas and built them in many ways. The walls of various members on the axis of the temple which would attract the direct attention of the onlooker, assumed an important form from period to period and style to style. These came to be decorated in various ways. The wall is that portion of the gopura-dvara which is above the

adhishtana and below the kapota or the cornice. A careful study of this section reveals that the Vijayanagara architects used several methods to embellish it. In the first instance it is left plain. The walls of the garbhagriha and antarala of the Lakshminarasimha temple of Kadiri (Anantapur District), Madhavaraya temple of Gorantla (Pl-41) (Anantapur District) the Chennakesava temple of Somapalem (P142) (Chittoor District), the Virabhadra and Vishnu Shrines of Lepakshi (P1-43) (Anantapur District) and Virabhadra temple of Rayachoti, Chennakesava Temple at Pushpagiri (Kadapa District) are plain. In the second stage, the walls of temple no.II in Chandragiri fort (Chittoor District), Kodandarama Temple in Chandragiri town, and the Pradaksina walls of the Lakshminarasimha temple of Kadiri are decorated with pilasters and sala-kostas. In the third stage the walls of the Umamaheswara temple of Pushpagiri (Pl-44), temple no.IV in the Chandragiri and the Kalyana Venkateswara temple of Mangapuram (Pl-45) are adorned with pilasters, kumbhapanjaras and sala-kostas. These are found on the walls of the gopura-dvara of the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi. In the next stage, the Umamaheswara temple, Srisailam (Kurnool district) is an example of a temple whose walls are adorned with pilasters, sala-kostas and kumbhapanjaras with deity sculptures in the intervening spaces. 12 In these cases not only pilasters but also kumbhapanjaras and koshtas are found on the walls. The niches are surmounted by sala-sikharas or simhalalata makara-toranas. The Siva temple of Penukonda (Pl-46) is an example of a temple whose walls are decorated with pilasters, sala-kostas, niches with simhalalata makara-toranas and kumbhapanjaras with sculptures in the intervening spaces. 13 In the next stage the walls of the Rama temple of Penukonda (Pl-47) are adorned with pilasters, sala-kostas, kambha-panjaras and niches, solid semicircular makara-toranas. The walls of the Chennakesava and Santanamalleswara temple of Pushpagiri are adorned with pilasters, sala kostas and kumbhapanjaras. In addition, between each pair of pilasters is a simhalalata-makara-toranas with a sculpture inside. The walls of the main shrine of the Venkataramana temple at Tadipatri (Pl-48) are adorned with pilaster, kumbhapanjara and niche surmounted by a miniature vimana containing a row of kuta, panjara, sala, panjara and kuta. The walls of the Parvati shrine (Pl-49) in the Ramalingeswara temple of Tadipatri are decorated with pilaster, niche surmounted by a vimana of three steps with a four faced nagara, sikhara, kumbha panjara and salakosta. The walls of the main shrine

in the same temple are decorated with pilaster, *kumbhapanjara* and niche surmounted by three *kutas*. In all these cases the pilasters, *kumbhapanjaras* and *kostas* are found on the walls. ¹⁴

The Kostas or niches found on the walls of the temples are of different types. In the first type the niches on the walls of the Mallikarjuna temple of Chandragiri are surmounted by semi-circular toranas topped by simhalalatas. The wall portion of the rear section of the mandapa has pilasters and niches at Srikalahastiswara temple at Kalahasti. The niches are surmounted by a semi-circular makara - torana topped by a kirtimukha motif. Within the makara-torana are the figures of seated Ganapati and dancers. The niches are provided with perforated screens. In the second type niches surmounted by simhalalata - makara - toranas are found in the Siva temple of Penukonda, the Devi Shrine in the Kalyana Venkateswara temple of Narayanavanam and temples No.III and V in the Chandragiri Fort. In the third variety sometimes empty sala-kostas are found on the walls of the temples. This variety is found in the temples Nos.II, IV and VII in the Chandragiri fort, the Kodandarama temple of Chandragiri town, the Chennakesava, Santanmalleswara and Umamaheswara temples of Pushpagiri, Kalyana-Venkateswara temple of Mangapuram and the Lakshminarasimha temple of Kadiri. In the fourth variety, some of the sala-kostas found on the walls of the mukhamandapa of the Mallikarjuna temple of Srisailam (Kurnool District), contain a perforated screen in the kosta part. In the fifth variety, the images of deities carved in round in the salakostas found on the walls of the Siva temple at Penukonda. In the sixth variety the kuta-Kosta found on the walls of the mukhamandapa of the Mallikarjuna temple of Srisailam, and Vedanarayanaswami temple at Nagalapuram, is decorated with pilasters, kumbha-panjaras and sala-kostas.

The kumbhapanjara found on the walls of Vijayanagara temples is carved in several varieties. In the first variety, there is a mere vase without foliage. kumbhapanjaras found on the walls of the Devi shine in the Venkataramana temple of Tadipatri are good examples of this variety. In the next variety, sometimes, the vase of the kumbhapanjara is located down below in the adhishtana portion and not in the wall portion. Examples of this type are found in the Devi shrine of the Venkataramana temple of Tadipatri and the Chennakesava, Santanamallesvara and Umamaheswara temples at Pushpagiri. In the third variety lion with forepaws raised

is found on either side of the vase of the kumbhapanjara in the Santhanamlleswara temple of Pushpagiri. In the fourth variety, in some cases, the foliage just hangs by the side of the vase and does not emerge from it. Examples of this variety are found on the walls of the main shrine in the Kalyana Venkateswara temple of Narayanavanam, the Ramalingeswara temple of Tadipatri and the main shrine in the Venkataramana temple of Tadipatri. In the fifth variety the foliage is extended. Example of this variety are found in the temple No.IV and VII in the Chandragiri fort in Chandragiri, Hazara Rama and Vittal temple of Hampi. In the sixth variety, the shaft of kumbhapanjara is cut into two vertical sections in the case of those that are found on the walls of the Devi shrine in the Ramalingeswara temple of Tadipatri. In the seventh variety the shaft of the kumbha-Panjara is round and which is found in the Santanamalleswara and Chennakesava temples of Pushpagiri. Deity sculptures are also found on them in both these temples. In the eighth variety the portion above the shaft of the kumbhapanjara which is found on the walls of the Satanamalleswara temple of Pushpagiri is peculiar. The phalaka is thin and expanded. Above it are two lions seated facing opposite directions. In between them is a square block and above it is a semi-circular citra-torana topped by a simhalalata. There is a round medallion in the centre containing a dancing figure. Immediately above the shaft, there is the Vijayanagara capital which again surmounted by a kuta in the case of the kumbhapanjaras found on the walls of the north and south gopuras of the Ramalingeswara temple of Tadipatri. The part above the phalaka contains' in some cases, a kuta and in some cases a Simhalalata. In the last variety the top most part of the kumbhapanjara differs. Sometimes it is a kalasa as in the case of those found on the gopura of the Venkataramana temple of Tadipatri. In some cases, it is a simhalalata. Examples of this variety are found on the walls of the main shrine in the Kalvana Venkateswara Temple of Narayanavanam (PI-50). In other cases, the topmost part is with the Vijayanagara capital.

The pilasters on the walls of Vijayanagara temples found under study are of different varieties.

- 1. The pilasters are plain with square shaft, we can see this type in the Devi shrine of the Kalyana-Venkateswra temple at Narayanavanam (Pl-51).
- 2. In some cases the pilasters have rectangular bases and polygonal shafts. We can examine them in the Siva and Rama temples of Penukonda.

- 3. The pilaster having a round shaft fully ornamented with scroll work and with a deity sculpture on the bottom portion of the shaft. This variety is found in the Santhanamalleswara temple of Pushpagiri.
- 4. A pilaster with a *pilasteret* projecting is noticed on the walls of the main shrine of the Venkataramana temple at Tadipatri.
- 5. A pilaster surmounted by a *simhalalata makaratorana* with deity figures inside the *torana* is found on the walls of the Siva temple at Penukonda (P1-52).
- 6. A pilaster surmounted by a simhalalata citra torana with a lotus in the centre. We can see this type on the walls of the Rama temple of Penukonda (Pl-53). It is clear from the above study that the architects of Vijayanagara temples borrowed the wall decorations from the Pallavas and Hoyasalas.

The walls of the gopuras are either plain or decorated in different varieties. The walls of the gopura of the Chennakesava temple at Somapalem and those of the gopuras in the Virabhadra temple at Rayachoti are plain. Its adhistana and walls are also plain. The superstructure is of brick and contains two talas each with the kuta. Panjara, sala series. There is an elephant on either side of the entrance. The adhistana of the Virabhadra temple, gopura of Rayachoti contains from bottom upwards - upana, broad patta, patta, broad gala, projecting patta, another gala and alingapattika. The brick super structure consists of two talas, each containing a row of the kuta, panjara, sala, panjara and kuta, series. The sikhara is oblong and surmounted by a row of kalasas. 16 The gopura of the Chennakesava group of the temples at Pushpagiri and the gopura before the Ramanuja shrine in the Govindaraja Temple at Tirupati have their walls decorated with mere pilasters and Vijayanagara capitals. The brick superstructure contains five storeys with kutas, galas and panjaras. The walls of the gopura of the innermost enclosure in the Srikalahstiswara temple of Kalahasti are decorated with pilasters having Vijayanagara capitals and simhalalata - makara - torana niches. The north gopura of the outer enclosure of the Kalahastiswara temple at Kalahasti has its walls decorated with pilasters and sala-kostas. The upapitha of the gopura contains from bottom upwards upana, broad patta, gala cut into compartments containing figures of elephants, patta, patta with scroll decoration, another patta with ribbon cuttings, broad gala containing

short pilasters and kumbhapanjras and comice decorated with bead garland and simhalalata gables. The front wall is decorated with three pilasters, kumbhapanjara, pilaster, sala-kosta, pilaster, and kumbhapanjara. 17 The walls of the second gopura in the Govindaraja temple of Tirupati are adorned with pilasters and kumbhapanjaras and sculptures in the inter spaces. The Krishnadevaraya gopura (Pl-54) in the Kalahastiswara temple which was fallen and replaced by a new (Pl-55) one recently at Kalahasti has its walls decorated with pilasters, sala-kostas and kumbhapanjaras. The kapota has a series of kirtimukhas with human heads or floral designs carved in the central sunken circular frame. The kudya is decorated with stambhas (pilasters), sala-kostas and kumbhapanjras. The stambhas are surmounted by pushpa-potikas. The prastara portion is decorated with lotus-petal design. The kapota is adorned with a row of kudu motifs. The most interesting part of the kostas is the superstructure, which is a replica in a miniature size of the superstructure with kalasa. The pilasters are in the form of fluted shafts and thin lower rectangular sections are decorated with flora and fauna and sculptures like Nritta Ganapati. Dakshinamurthi, Kaliyamardana, etc., the surmounting portion of these pilasters is decorated with pushpa-potika brackets. The north and south sides of the gopura contain a projection in the centre starting from bottom to top. 18 The walls of the outer gopura of the Govindaraja temple at Tirupati are decorated with pilasters, sala-kostas, kumbhapanjaras and kuta-kostas. The walls of the north and south gopura of the Ramalingeswara temple of Tadipatri are adorned with pilasters, kumbhapanjaras and sala-kostas with sculptures in the intervening spaces. The overall effect of wall decorations is harmony, balance revealing synthesis of the whole structure. The super structure and the wall section of the gopura gateway is normally separated by a kapota. Both plain and decorative kapotas are found in the gopura gateways of the Vijayanagara temples. In the first instance a broad and plain band is found demarcating the termination of the wall section and the beginning of the superstructure in the gopura gateway of Chennakesava temple at Somapalem. Plain and horizontal bands are noticed in the case of a kapota found in the gopura dvara located infront of the main shrine in Chennakesava group of temples at Pushpagiri. Highly ornamental kapotas are noticed in the gopura gateways that are found at Lepakshi, Tadipatri, Hampi, Millampalli, Kalahasti, Srisailam. Mangapuram, Tiruvannamalai, etc. The gopura gateway at Srikalahsti is provided

with ornate rectangular doorway measuring 64.2' x 14.7' x 29'. The superstructure and the wall section of the gopura gateway are separated by a highly ornamented kapota. The kapota of the gopura gateway of the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi is decorated with ornamental kudus surrounted by kirtimukha motifs at regular intervals. There are also considerably projected rows of plain semicircular projections, simhalalata kudus, ribbed mouldings, dancing figures, miniature pavillions, couchant sardulas and geometrical designs, used for the decoration of the kapotas in the fully advanced gopura gateways of the Vijayanagara period. The superstructure of these gopura gateways is pyramidal in shape. It is normally composed of a series of zones or tiers or storeys diminishing in size as they ascend.

The brick superstructure of Kalahastiswara temple is pyramidal in shape and consists of six storeys diminishing in shape and consists of six storeys diminishing in size as they ascend. The average of slope from the vertical bottom section ranges between 25 to 30 and the width as its truncated apex is approximately half of its base. The pyramidal superstructure is surmounted with an elongated barrel-vaulted roof topped by nine *kalasas* with prominent gable ends on either side of it. The pyramidal superstructure was constructed with bricks and lime to reduce the weight. While constructing this massive and imposing superstructure the architects took sufficient care to maintain harmony between the horizontal and vertical patterns.¹⁹ Unfortunately this tall gopura is collapsed recently.

The average angle of slope form the vertical bottom section ranges from 20° to 25°, and the width at its truncated apex is approximately one half of its base. On the flat summit of the pyramidal superstructure is mounted on elongated barrel-vaulted roof with prominent gable ends on either side of it. On the central section and in every storey, door-ways are arranged in a vertical line. A careful study of the pyramidal superstructures of these *gopura* gateways enable us to divide them into two types. In the first type the sloping sides are relatively straight, firm and rigid in their contours and appertaining in their walls more to the strictly pyramidal figure. In keeping with its geometrical form, the decoration of this variety is of conventional order, usually architectural in its character and consisting of pillars, pilasters and niches applied in such a manner as to produce the different stages of its confirmation. The best examples of this type are found in front of the Achyutaraya

temple at Hampi, Kalahastiswara temple at Kalahasti and the Kalyana Venkateswara temple at Mangapuram in Rayalaseema (Pl-56).²⁰

A variation of this type, in decoration details is found in the gopura gateway of the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi. In this case, apart from the pilasters, and niches, figure sculptures are introduced. They are normally found inside and in between the niches. They represent both secular and sacerdotal figure sculptures. It is unfortunate that only the lower portion of this superstructure is intact whereas the upper part is destroyed. In the second type of pyramidal superstructure of the gopura gateway the sloping is straight but little bit curved and concave, so that the entire structure has a soaring upward sweep which, although not entirely substantial, is very impressive. Further in this variety, the surface treatment is of more florid in nature. Figure sculptures representing, Saivite and Vaishnavaite themes, dvarapalas, dwarfish ganas in the act of carrying weight with the help of their upraised hands and shoulders, erotic figures, dikpalas (Pl-57), etc. are found in every portion of the pyramidal tower in a bewildering manner. All these figure sculptures are very thickly plastered and in some cases even adorned with paints. Examples of this type are found in the temples of Pushpagiri, Tadipatri, Kadiri, Tirupati, Kalahasti, Narayanavanam, etc. The front projecting verticals of dvara at Kalahastiswara temple are decorated with a Vijayanagara symbols like varaha, dagger, sun and moon (Pl-58). In the middle of the verticals, the images of Ganapati and Kumara riding their respective vehicles are carved. The upper portion of dvara is made beautiful with dwarf motifs and also lotus designs. The door jambs on both sides and the lintel have a prominent meandering floral creeper emanating from makaras. In the circles of this creeper are carved many miniature sculptures depicting gods, men and women in various dancing poses and playing on musical instruments. Apart from the doorjambs there are six plain pilasters on each side of the dvara. At the bottom of the each of the doorjambs, a graceful female figure is sculptured as holding a creeper (Pl-59). In the centre of the dvara on either side there are roomlike portions with two pillars on an elevated platform. The same is repeated in the upper section of the dvara also. The northern room of the dvara is provided with wooden ladder to reach the top storey of the gopura. The ceiling portion of the dvara is decorated with lotus medallions. The southern wall of the dvara, contains Bhikstanamurthi panel.21 The Vijayanagara architects while constructing these

superstructures took sufficient care and attention in maintaining a harmonious balance between the horizontal and vertical patterns. In these cases the pilasters, niches and the central door way openings stand for verticality, whereas the horizontal door way openings stand for verticality whereas the horizontal bands which separate the storeyed zones and the crowning barrel-vaulted roof stand for horizontality.

Gandharvas:

The Vijayanagara sculptors took interest and care in the representation of semi-divine celestial musicians. They carved a beautiful apsara consort of a gandharva (Pl-60) on the pillars of the Virabhadra temple at Lepakshi. It is in hybrid form and decorated with haras, kankanas, mekhala, etc. She is holding a vina in her first hand where as the other hand is kept in suchi-hasta. She is adorned with a kiritamakuta. In the other instance, a gandharva is shown holding an incense burner in his right hand. He is also represented in hybrid form. The curved style and the shapely legs are extremely realistic. He is also adorned with various haras and a kiritamakuta. Similar representations are also found on the exterior walls of the Chennakesava temple at Pushpagiri. In this case they are shown on either side of the gods and goddesses. They are playing on a vina and flute respectively. In these cases, except the floral plumage shown on their backs, there is nothing to suggest the hybrid form of the semi-divine beings. The representation of gandharvas in Indian Art was first started by the Jain and Buddhist sculptors. They are often depicted with bird-like lower parts, with wings attached to their arms. Their upper part represent human form. They are adorned with crown, ear-rings and other ornaments.²² These are noticed in the Udayagiri-Khandagiri caves.²³ In all these cases, they are shown either playing on musical instruments or dancing and represented as holding garlands. In the Vijayanagara representations they have neither wings nor shown in a flying attitude. They are not even carrying garlands. They are mostly shown playing on musical instruments and rarely depicted in the act of offering incense apparently to the gods and goddesses.

Chaithya arch or Kudu Motif:

The Chaitya arch or the kudu motif is one of the important and most frequently found as a decorative motif in the Vijayanagara temples. This motif is

generally found on the adhistanas, surmounting portion of the kapotas and pilasters, top of the prasada walls and below the first storey of the vimana gopura-dvaras. pillars, pedestals of the individual images, domical and sela crowning members of the vimanas and on the projecting cornices of the door-ways. Both plain and highly ornamented kudu motifs are found in the Vijayanagara temples. The plain examples are found on the lower section of the pillars and images in the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi. In this case, they are simply shown as a semi-circular arch with a square projection on the summit and a plain circular cavity in the centre. In the second type a kirtimukha is represented at the open and floral bands, curved in shape, are shown emerging from its mouth. This type of examples are found in plenty on the basal section of the sculptures carved on the pillars of the kalyanamandapa at Lepakshi. Its final development is noticed on the exterior of the Vijayanagara temples at Pushpagiri, Tadipatri, Srikalahsti, etc. In some cases the contour of the kudu is composed of intricately designed with floral patterns. Beautifully modeled and boldly designed kirtimukha (Pl-61) head is placed on the summit. Different ornamental motifs and designs are sculptured in the central sunken section of the kudu. A prominent human head, in high - relief, is very often found in the central section. But in miniature shrines, floral designs, seated human figures, etc. are also depicted in the central section of the kudu motifs. The Buddhist sculptors were the first to introduce this chaitya arch in the plastic art of India. Then gradually the kudu motifs found in the early Chalukyas, Vishnukundins, Pallava, Chola and Vijayanagara temples.

The most favourite decoration on the edges of the roof in the Vijayanagara temples is a row of brick-built arches containing deity figures in stucco or without them. The *mahamandapas* in the temples of Somapalem, Kadiri (Pl-62) and Tirupati are best examples for this decoration. Temples without this decoration are the Siva and Rama temples of Penukonda, temples in the Chandragiri fort and the Kalyana Venkateswara temple of Mangapurm.

Upapitha:

The upapitha (Pl-63), adhistana (Pl-64), wall portion and the superstructure are the principal architectural elements of these gopura gateways. A detailed study of these parts and their evolution are discussed below. Upapitha is the lowest

number. Its purpose is to give stability and security to the structure laid over it. Both simple and highly ornate upapithas are noticed in the gopura gateways of the Vijayanagra temples. A simple and plain upapitha normally contains a broad upana, a couple of pattikas, gala and alinga pattika. The gala is generally a broad one cut into square and rectangular compartments by using nakulapadas (dwarf pilasters). Sometimes, the alinga pattika is adorned with plain kudu motifs or ornamental chaitya motifs in high - relief. The best examples of this type are found in the gopura gateways of the Chennakesavaswami temple at Somapalem and Pushpagiri. Pleasing moulded and gracefully adorned upapithas are noticed in the gopura gateways that are found infront of the temples at Mangapruam, Tirupati, Tadipatri, Narayanavanam, etc. The upapitha of the gopura gateway of the Chennakesava temple at Millampalli has a prominent upana, wide gala, padam and a mahapattika as a crowning member. The gala portion is adorned with nakulapadas which are provided with capital mouldings. The space in between the pilasters is empty. But on the central facing section of the gala, an ornamental niche is arranged. It has two pilasters on either side topped by a kapota which in its turn surmounted by a semicircular makaratorana. Beautiful figure scultprues are carved inside these makara toranas. Similar upapithas are found in the gopura gateway of the Kalyana Venkateswara temple at Mangapuram, Narayanavanam. The next stage of its evolution is noticed in the upapithas (Pl-65) of the gopura gateways of the Venkataramana temple at Tadipatri. In this example the upapitha has upana, two broad pattikas, ribbed and plain kumudas, wide gala and alinga-pattikas. Here the presence of padma Pattika, ribbed and plain kumudas and the chaitya arches crowned by prominent kirtimukha motifs on the alinga pattika deserve special notice. Further the niches having multiple pilasters on either side and supporting intricately-designed wagon-vaulted superstructure with a series of kalasas are also introduced in the gala portion. The upapitha of the northern gopura gateway located in the second prakara wall of the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi gives some very interesting information in this connection. It is roughly ten feet in height. It has a plain and wide upana. Its upper section is decorated with a frieze of elephants in different positions and postures. This is followed by a plain pattika and a pattika adorned with floral designs, maha-padma, a wide gala and an alinga-pattika adorned with a series of kudus canopied by kirtimukha motifs. The upapithas have

two interesting features 1) Lovely dancing girls in miniature size arranged in highrelief on the padma moulding and 2) the gala cut into compartments by using ornamental pilasters. These pilasters have pleasingly and meticulously designed capitals and the characteristic Vijayanagara floral brackets. In between these pilasters are introduced kumbha-panjaras and highly refined ornamental niche. The lower section of the niche has a miniature sculpture of a seated god in the central cavity where as the upper section is occupied by a semi-circular makaratorana. Further the absence of a pilaster with a kumbha base below the panjara above is a very interesting feature. Here the place of pilaster is occupied by a kumbha. These are the novel features that are seldom observed in the upapithas of the other gopura gateways of the Vijayanagara temples. The eastern upapitha of the same gopura gateway display some changes in the ornamentation. Here the gala section is ornamented with big and miniature models of niches. These niches are provided with multiple stambhikas below and eka-tala dravidian sikhara above. The domical cupola is adorned with an intricately designed kudu motif having a prominent human head in the central cavity. The miniature niches are arranged in between the bigger ones. They have two slender pilasters on either side and supporting the superstructure above. In these cases the crowning part of the sikhara is barrelvaulted. The Vijayanagara architects with the intention of maintaining new variety and novelty might have adopted these big and small koshtas in the gala section of the eastern side of the upapitha of the gopura gateway of the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi. Further to bring out rich inter-play of light and shade these niches are carved in high and low reliefs respectively.

The Final stage of the artistic development of the upapitha of the gopura gateway is found on the northern and southern gopura-dvaras of the Bugga Ramalingeswara temple at Tadipatri. It is built with the help of the fine grained black granite stone. Here the upana is decorated with a series of miniature shrines — a feature seldom observed in the other examples. It is followed by a pattika adorned with gods, goddesses and dwarfish ganas in various postures. Then it is followed by a maha-padma pattika which in its turn followed by a fillet (antarhita), ornamental tripatta, antarnita padma pattika, wide gala and alinga pattika, the tripatta contain not only lozenge patterns but also extremely pleasing lotus pendants at regular intervals. On the gala section, the Vijayanagara sculptors introduced pilasters with

fluted shafts surmounted by capital mouldings and projecting floral brackets. The basal or base section of these pilasters is occupied by the sculptures of divinities. The upper section of the gala and immediately below the crowning pattika runs a padma moulding regularly interrupted by the representation of dwarfish ganas. It is in the act of bharavahikas. The most interesting aspect of the upapitha is that the horizontal mouldings are regularly interrupted by the introduction of a miniature shrine having dvitala—sikhara. Two long and slender pilasters are shown standing on either side of the shrine supporting a triforium arch having a kirtimukha motif at the apex. The Vijayanagara sculptors by introducing these ornamental shrine models successfully maintained a judicious and harmonious balance between the vertical and horizontal pattern whereas miniature shrine models canopied by triforium arches stand for vertical pattern. Infact every inch of this upapitha experienced the impact of the sculptors chisel. This may be well called as the "sculptors extravagance" normally noticed in the Hoyasala temples at Belur, Halebid, Somanthpur, etc.

Adhishtana:

It is generally found on the top of the upapitha. Both plain and highly ornamental adhistanas are found in the gopua gateways of the Vijayanagara temples. The gopura-dvaras that are found in front of the Chennakesava group of temples at Pushpagiri, Chennakesava temple at Somapalem, The Kalyana Venkateswara Temple at Mangapuram, Chandrasekhara Temple at Hampi, etc. They have plain (simple) adhistanas. In most of these cases a broad upana, tripatta and pattikas with deep niches in between them are noticed. In one case the top most band is aborned with deeply incised horizontal lines. In the case of the main gopuradvara of the Chennakesava group of temples, Pushpagiri the upana has a row of chaitya-kudus. Similar ornamental devices are also noticed on the adhistanas of the gopura-dvaras of the Varaha and the Chandrasekhara temple at Hampi. Mahapadma-pattika, mahapattika, kshudra-pattika and alpa-padma pattika with antarhitas intervening in between them are found very prominently in the adhistana of the gopura gateways of the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi. The adhistanas of the gopura gateways of the Chennakesava temple at Millampalli, the Venkataramana and Ramalingeswara temples at Tadipatri have the adhistana of the gopura gateway of the Chennakesava temple at Millampalli. A broad pattika as

upana, mahapadma, ribbed tripatta and highly ornate alingana-pattika are renewed or restored. The alinga-pattika has a series of chaitya arches with human heads carved in the central sunken circular frame. The next stage of its formation is found in the adhistana of the eastern gopura gateway of the Vithala temple at Hampi. In this case the space in between the mouldings like upana, tripatta and alinga-pattika, fine figure sculptures like seated sardulas, motifs like pilasters and geometrical designs which are carefully carved. The adhistana (Pl-66) of the eastern gopura gateway of the Venkataramana temple at Tadipatri marks further development. A row of pleasing modeled elephants are noticed on the top of the upana. The recess in between the top two mouldings is filled with a row of scated sardulas. Further the second moulding from the top contains a frieze of chaitya motifs. It is observed that proper care is taken to employ sculptures like saradulas, elephants, dwarfish ganas and floral designs for the decoration of the adhistanas by the Vijayanagara sculptors is clearly evident. But the climax of the decorative art of the Vijayanagara period is noticed in the adhistanas of the northern and southern gateways of the Ramalingeswara temple at Tadipatri. Here the adhistana contains six delicately designed and superbly sculptured mouldings. The lower and the upper bands are decorated with a frieze of dwarfish ganas as bhara-vahikas, pillared pavilions, multi-storeyed miniature models of shrines, stylized hamsas scrolling the representations of the same aa the bands of the Hoyasala sculptors, full blown lotus flowers, horses, dancers, musicians, gods and goddesses, ornamental kudus with human heads inside, geometrical and floral patterns, etc. are found carved in every inch of those adhistanas. They are considered to be the best and the most highly ornate adhistanas in the entire gopura gateways of the Vijayanagara temples. Salakostas are found in the adhistanas in the Venkataramana temple of Tadipatri. It is also found in the adhistanas of the famous Vithal temple at Hampi. 25 The adhistanas of the Vijayanagara style mentioned above combined the principle of simplicity and elegance. They are not austere because, semi-circular elevations, animal friezes and sala-kostas relieve tension and monotony. Nor do these adhistanas never form over decoration as in the case of the Hoyasala temples. Thus elegance and simplicity have been harmoniously balanced in these adhistanas, which avoid voluptuousness.

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Chapter – VI Animals and birds as Decorative Motifs

CHAPTER – VI ANIMALS AND BIRDS AS DECORATIVE MOTIFS

There are many representations of animals and birds in the Vijayanagara temples and also other temples in Rayalaseema. Various animals domestic as well as wild are carved with great ease, fidelity to nature and unfailing vitality. Apart from first hand observation, the sculptors were influenced by the traditions and beliefs concerning many of them and this had been established as religious symbols. Certain animals and birds were in one way or other connected with specific deities or to divine and semi divine beings. Among them, mention may be made of Swan (hamsa), the eagle (garuda), the elephant (hasti), the bull (Nandi), the horse (asva), the crocodile (makara), the snake (naga), the cow (go), the boar (varaha), the lion (simha), deer, monkeys, rams, dogs, buffalos, birds like doves, parrots, peacocks, etc. Carvings of all these creatures are found in almost all the Rayalaseema temples.

The sculptors took special interest in the representation of flora as decorative motifs. Varieties of floral designs and the linier carvings are found on the pattas of the *adhisthana*, on the shafts of the pillars, pilasters and on the ceilings. Regarding fauna, animals like elephants, monkeys, bulls, cows, rams, dogs, buffaloes, deer and birds like doves, parrots, swans, pea-cocks are found sculptured on the pillars. A long row of elephants and horses are also shown on the pattas of the *adhisthanas*. The trees and mountains are also carved beautifully.

The animals carved in the temples understudy include the mythical animals like two standing lions with one head which are found on one of the pillars in the hundred-pillared mandapa in Srikalahastiswara Temple in Kalahasti. Another excellent sculpture of this type is found on one of the pillars in the left side mandapa of the Bhikshala-gopura. In this relief three dancing males are represented with four legs instead of six. The central figure is shown sharing the legs of the figures carved on either side of it. This type of sculptures show the artist's skill in making full use of the limited space and also to invite the onlooker to exercise his imagination to grasp the full significance of the object depicted.²

For example the *Dikpala* figures are represented in some of the temples along with their vahanas or vehicles. On the ceiling of the mukha-mandapa before

the Virabhadra shrine at Lepakshi, there is a large painting of Virabhadra, right below are painted the *dikpalas* on their *vahanas*. Indra riding an elephant, Agni a ram, Yama a buffalo, Varuna a makara, Vayu a deer, Kubera a horse, Isana a bull and *Nairuta* a man.³ Life-size figures of these *vahanas* are seen in the *kalyanamandapa* of the same temple. However wild animals of different types are also portrayed in some temples, without any direct reference to their mythical association.

The Prakara walls of Mallikarjuna temple Srisailam have friezes of hunting scenes (Pl.67, 68). Mention may be made of the fight between a charging tiger and an adventurous hunter, a galloping deer, a boar smelling the hide out of its enemy, a bison preparing to charge at its raised head and curved tail, arrow discharged by hunter, a pair of hunters standing on the top of a tree deeply absorbed in hunting deer, while a wild boar is leaping into the air with an express desire of attacking the hunters, etc. Hunting was a much loved sport and pastime of the Vijayanagara days. These sculptures are also found at other temples of Rayalaseema and are comparatively realistic. A. Gopal Rao mentions several birds and animals depicted on the pillars of the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi (Pl-69,70,71,72,73, 74,75,76). He says "in the style of Vijayanagara freedom and abandon is seen among the forms of animals sculptured on the pillars of kalyanamandapa, the mukha-mandapa and on the walls of the ardha-mandapa. Elephants, deer, cows. monkeys and many other forms make their appearance and live, play, fresh and gambol on faces of the shafts of the pillars and walls. Though one of them may be considered a master piece, they are good sculptures and cannot be neglected by a student of art. The forms of birds are all stylized and done in low relief.4

Broadly, the animal representations of the temples can be divided into two classes, the real and mythical. Some Gandharva figures are portrayed as half human and half-animal. In some instances, it is animal below the waist and human above it and also vice versa. The figures of animals include the lion, tiger, cheetah, elephant, horse, bison, wild boar, bull, cow, monkeys, dog, ram, antelope, buffalo, rat, crocodile, reptiles like the snake, lizard, tortoise; birds like the parrot, peacock, swan, and aquatic creatures like the fish etc. On the basis of their mode of movement, the fauna depicted in the temples may be grouped as under.

- I. Creeping creatures
- II. Swimming creatures
- III. Walking and running animals
- IV. Jumping animals
- V. Flying birds.

I. Creeping Creatures:

1. Snake:

All serpents or snakes come under this category. Snakes are represented in the temples more often in their mythical and symbolic attributes than as creatures in nature. The snake is a symbol of Virupaksha, the family deity of the Vijayanagara rulers. Virupaksha is the lord of Nagas or serpents. The monarchs of the Vijayanagara empire upto Venkata II uninterruptedly signed their grants in the name of Srivirupaksha invoking the blessings.⁵ Snake worship seems to have been in vogue even from the times of Mohenjodaro. Snakes are connected with the Buddhism and Jainasim. Where ever Saivism and Vaishnavism prevailed, snake worship always co-existed.⁶ A black serpent called Kaliya is associated with one of Krishna's adventures. The Vijayanagara temples in Rayalaseema have many carvings representing the scene of Krishna dancing on the head of Kaliya (kaliyamardan), who had made the Yamuna his home and was a menace to the people of Gokula.⁷ The carvings of kaliya mardana Krishna are found in the temples of Tadipatri, Tirumala, Tirupati, Srikalahasti, Nagalapuram, Ahobilam, Somapalem, Kadiri, Vontimitta etc. A realistic bas-relief of a snake charmer and his snake are found on a pillar of the kalyanamandapa of Lepakshi temple. Here he is seen playing with his pipe while snake is dancing with its raised hood in the basket. The snake is also seen as an ear ornament (sarpakundala), Yagnopavita, bracelet, girdle etc. Naga yagnopavitas is found on the carvings of Siva and Ganapati figures in the temples of Lepakshi, Pushpagiri and Srikalahasti. Mythical and multi-hooded serpents are also seen in Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda.8 The snake by virtue of its association with some of the gods of the Hindu pantheon cannot be missed in the sculptures of the temples. It is shown sometimes in one of the hands of Siva, Durga and Kumara. It also appears as an ear ornament. A gigantic serpent is carved in stone in the Virabhadra temple at Lepakshi, with its majestic hood serving as a canopy for the *Linga* of Siva.9

II. Swimming Creatures:

Temples dedicated to the *Matsyavatara* form of Vishnu are rare. A figure of *Matsyavatara* in the Lepakshi paintings shows the lord of half human and half fish. The door-jambs of the second entrance *gopura* of Lepakshi temple have figures of fish instead of half human and half-fish. The *gopura* of the Bugga Ramalingeswara temple, Tadipatri has the figure of *Matsyagandhi*, who is shown seated on a fish. The Vedanarayana temple at Nagalapuram is one of the few to enshrine the *Matsyavatara* form of Vishnu. The *Prakara* wall of the Srisailam temple has a panel portraying a group of fish varying in sizes.

III. Walking and Running creatures:

Representations of these animals are many in the temples of the Rayalaseema region. They may be divided into (A) Wild animals, (B) Domestic animals. The wild animals comprise the lion, tiger, cheetah, elephant, bison and the boar; and the other domestic ones are the horse, bull, buffalo, cow, dog, ram, goat and the makara.

A. Wild Animals

1. Lion:

The lion is found more as a vahana or vehicle than an individual animal. It figures also as a decorative motif in natya-mandapa of the Lepakshi temple. The lion is also represented in the bracket pillars, which are abundantly found in almost all the temples under review. The pillars are generally known as vyala bracket pillars. The adhistana of the back gopura of the Bugga Ramalingeswara temple had a fine carving of a female figure stabbing a lion with her sword. The lion with its wide mouth open is shown as pouncing upon the female figure.

The figures of Narasimhavatara found in the temples represent Supreme God with the head of lion and the body of a human being. The God is represented in various forms such as Yoga Narasimha (Pl-77), Ugra Narasimha, Girija Narasimha, Lakshmi Narasimha (Pl-78), etc. ¹⁰ The carvings of Narasimha are many in the temples of Ahobilam. The lion is also used as a decorative motif in Vijayanagara art, and it is very similar to its pallava proto-type and Vishnukundins. It stands with its right fore-paw raised, its neck erect, wide open mouth as an ornamental motif. It is possible that the lion was carved in the Vishnu Kundin temples by the rulers to

commemorate their triumph over the Kadamba monarch, whose name is not mentioned by Marappa.¹¹

2. Tiger:

The tiger is depicted rarely in the temples. The Mallikarjuna temple at Srisailam contains a hunting panel illustrating the tiger pouncing up on a person. This carving is realistic, the stripes on the animal are not seen in the stone sculpture.

3. Cheetah:

This ferocious animal with spots is also rare in the sculptural representations of temples. The hunting scene portrayed on the *prakara* wall of the Mallikarjuna temple at Srisailam (P1-79), shows a cheetah grabbing the neck of a buffalo. It's spots are not visible. The ferociousness of the wild animal and despair of its victim are well portrayed in the sculpture. The ceiling of the *mukha-mandapa* of the Lepakshi temple also contains a panel of paintings illustrating the legend of first Hoyasala of the Hoyasala dynasty. In one of the paintings, the king is seen opposing a stopped cheetah, which having entered the hermitage of a Rishi is trying to bite off the head of a boy. The next composition shows a boy stabbling and killing the Cheetah. 12

4. Elephant :

The elephant is another animal prominent in temples in India. Elephant friezes are abundantly found in the temples of Rayalaseema especially in the Vijayanagara temples, which constitute a prominent decorative motif. In the Hindu myths, the elephant is the vehicle of *Indra*, named as *Airavata*, which is declared supreme among elephants by Lord Krishna in the Bhagavadgita. According to Hindu belief, the *Diggajas* or elephants protect the eight quarters. To the south Indian craftsmen, the elephant became a favourite animal. The Hoyasala rulers depict this animal extensively in their temples. They can be seen for example on the *upanam* or the frieze above the basement of Hoyasala temple like Kesava temple at Somanathpur. It is likely that Vijayanagara craftsmen adopted this practice from their political predecessors, the Hoyasalas.

Elephants are generally depicted in the sculptures in a series on upanam. They are found carved with chains. As they were purchased from abroad at great

price, they were treated with great care and consideration. In the Vijayanagara sculptures, five riders are seen on each elephant. Elephant carvings are also seen on the flanks of a temple doorways. Almost all the Vijayanagara temples represent this motif. The figure of elephant could be seen engraved on a coin of Mallikarjuna, one of Vijayanagara emperors. It is a known fact that Ganapati the lord of all learning has the head of an elephant. The prakara walls, walls of the gopuras, adhishtanas etc., of the temples are adorned with elephant friezes. The prakara walls of the Mallikarjuna temple have carvings of elephants along with mahouts. The elephant friezes almost found in the temples of Nagalapuram, Lepakshi (Pl-80), Kadiri, Rayachoti, Tadipatri, Tirupati, Tirumala, Vontimitta, Tiruchanur, Narayanavanam, Srisailam (Pl-81), etc.

5. Bison:

The *prakara* walls of Mallikarjuna temple Srisailam depict the figures of bison among the hunting scenes. In one of them, a bison is shown impressively with its raised head and curved tail, as if getting ready to charge against the enemy.

6. Boar :

The wild boar (varaha) (Pl-82) was adopted as the royal emblem (lanchana) of the Vijayanagara rulers. In the varaha incarnation Vishnu as the primeval boar is stated to have plunged in to the great ocean to rescue the earth, which had been carried off and hidden there by the demon Hiranyaksha. The varaha symbol was adopted as a motif by monarchs from the fifteenth century A.D. onwards and continued till the Vijayanagara Era. Boar as the royal symbol continued to survive on the grants of Vijayanagara emperors till almost the last day of their empire. The devotion of these rulers to varaha is evident through the inscription of Bukka-I who prays that "the boar may grant increase of wealth to the good. During the reign of Achyutaraya the image of the boar was carved on his copper plates. Peven during the reign of Venkata-II, the boar prevailed in his epigraphs. The seal of the Krishnadevaraya bears the figures of sun, moon, a boar and dagger.

In sculptures also the boar appears as royal symbol on the walls of Vijayanagara temples. The entrance of Raja gopura of the Govindarajaswami temple, Tirupati bears an emblem of boar with the sword in front and the sun and the

moon above it. The wild boar appropriately is represented in the Lepakshi paintings illustrating the kiratarjuniya story which is essentially a hunters story. The story begins with the advent of Mukasura or the Boar.²¹ In one scene, Siva and Parvati are shown in the tribal disguise of *kiratas*. In the next stage both Siva and Arjuna are shooting arrows on the boar. The boar runs out of fear and creates a pandemonium in the forest. As the boar runs some sages are shown fleeing to save their lives. The boar dominates both in colour and figure.²²

The kiratarjuniya story is also seen in sculptures of Lepakshi temple, in which the physical features of the boar are clearly delineated. The prakara walls of the Mallikarjuna temple, Srisailam have large number of boar carvings among the hunting scenes. In one panel, the boar is represented as smelling the hide out of its enemy. In another a number of boars are shown scattered here and there. Their canine teeth are also noticeable in the sculptures.

B. Domestic Animals:

1. Horse:

The sculptural representations of horses are more in number than those of other animals. The horse was associated with the asvamedha sacrifice of the vedic rituals.²³ In regard to the artistic representation of the horse, Rupavaliya says that "the horse has hoops like balls and the lower part like hound, a neigh like the sound of storm, lotus eyes, he is swift as the sound of the wind, stately as a lion, has the gait of a dancer, a face like a cluster of munamal flowers and the hinder like a stack of corn.²⁴

Both sculptures and paintings of Vijayanagara temples represent a very large number of horse figures. The friezes of horses (Pl-83,84) on the *adhistana* and the wall are abundant. In the scenes, illustrated on the *prakara* walls of the Mallikarjuna temple, Ahobilam temple, Bugga Ramalingesvara temple etc., horse was depicted in different patterns. Bracket pillars with horse riders also form part of these carvings. The Lepakshi paintings illustrate the story of *Manuchola* portraying his chariot drawn by horses. But the horse figures look like bulls and are without trappings. They look like toy horses and represented as decorative motif.²⁵

2. Bull :

The bull is also a much venerated animal and treated as holy. The saivite temples frequently depict the figures of bull. The bull is known as nandi vahana of Lord Siva, who is shown carved along with the bull in the form of Vrishabarudamurti. A panel of Lepakshi paintings illustrating this aspect of Siva offers figures of the bull. In this panel the Nandi is shown raising his fore leg as if he is in the act of moving. The Nandi figures are found at Virabhadra temple, Lepakshi, Srikalahastiswara temple, Bugga Ramalingeswara temple, in all of them the Nandi is shown as seated. But, a pillar of the kalyanamandapa of the Lepakshi temple has figure of a standing bull with his right leg raised.

3. Buffalo:

The buffalo is represented both in sculptures and paintings of the period under review as the vahana of Yama in the Lepakshi temple. Beneath the painting of Virabhadra on the ceiling of the Mukha-mandapa, of the lepakshi temple, the dikapalas are depicted on their respective vahanas and Yama is seen along with his buffalo. Carvings of the same figures are found in the kalyanamandapa of the same temple. On the prakara wall of the Mallikarjuna temple, at Srisailam, there is a fine carving of a buffalo attacked by a cheetah, which is trying to grab the neck of the buffalo, which appears to be desperately trying to free itself from the teeth of the cheetah. Both the animals are depicted realistically. This episode has no reference to any myth or legend.

4. Cow:

The cow is yet another animal regarded as holy and worshipped. The holy cow has become proverbial. The carvings and paintings of the period have several examples of the cow. It is important to note that the animal is rarely found as mere decorative motif. There is a curious relief of a cow with one body and three heads (Pl-85). This figure is beautifully carved on a pillar of the *kalyanamandapa* of the Lepakshi temple. The three heads face different directions.

The ceiling of the *natya-mandapa* in the Virabhadrasvami temple, Lepakshi has painting illustrating the story of *Manuniti chola*.²⁷ They have the figures of a cow and the calf. In the vaishnavite temples where the scenes of Krishna lilas are

depicted Krishna is seen along with a number of cows. In the panel of Venugopala, a herd of cows are found listening to the melodies of Krishna's venu. In some figures Krishna is seen with a single cow. In the Chintala Venkataramana temple, where the *Venugopala* figure is found on the wall of the main shrine, the cows are seen raising their heads in response to His music. The Nagalapuram temple too has a Venugopala figure (Pl-86) in the company of cows.

5. Dog:

The dog is generally portrayed in the temples along with the *Bhairava* form of Siva. In the porch in front of the main shrine of Srikalahastiswara temple there is bas-relief of *Bhairava*, behind whom stands the dog. The dog as a domesticated pet creature is not present in the sculptures. Nor does it appear as a decorative motif.

6. Ram:

The Lepakshi paintings and sculptures illustrating the dikpalas present this animal as the *Vahana* of *agni*, the guardian god of the south-west. The paintings in the *mukha-mandapa* reveal the figure of *agni* riding the ram. The *dikpala* carvings in the *kalyanamandapa* show *agni* standing on a pedestal and his ram is represented as a low relief figure on the pedestal (P1-87).

7. Goat:

The goat, though a familiar domestic animal, appears in the sculptures not on its own but on part of the body of a demon called Daksha. In the panels of Virabhadra at Lepakshi, Virabhadra is accompanied by Daksha with goats head. There is a colossal carving of Virabhadra along with the goat-headed Daksha on the outskirts of kadiri in Anantapur district. A bas-relief of the Virabhadra along with Daksha may be seen carved on a pillar of the porch in front of the Srikalahastiswara temple.

8. Crocodile or Makara:

The crocodile (Pl-88) appears as a decorative motif mainly. The crocodile has been conventionally associated with sanctity. In the *Bhagavadgita* while speaking about purifiers Sri Krishna says to Arjuna that he was the *Makara* among the fish.²⁸ It is one of the signs of the Hindu Zodiac, the vahana of goddess Ganga. The makara finds a place in *Bhagavata purana*, *Amarakosa*, *Lalitavistara* and

Panchatantra in which it is treated not only as a aquatic but also an amphibious animal. The makara is featured prominently in Vijayanagara art. It is depicted as the vehicle of Varuna, of Yakshas, Yakshanis, and the river deity Ganga. It occurs profusely in the early Indian art motif, and is seen in the *Maradarsana* scene as one of his attendants at *Saranath*, on spandrels of early tympanums, on the architraves of early toranas, on throne backs, in jewellery, on medallions of pillars or as gargoyles.

The makara-torana is another decorative motif found in the temples under review. This is carved as a canopy of the cult images sculptured on the pillars of the kalyana and hundred pillared-mandapas and on the exterior walls.

In all the examples the arch is composed of multi-stringed floral bands. The top portion either left blank or is occupied by a boldly designed kirtimukha motif or a floral design. Generally multiple floral strings are shown flowing out freely from the mouth of kirtimukha. The makaras are carved below, on either sides of the floral arch. The upraised trunks of the makaras are shown touching the floral scrolls shown above.²⁹

In the Vijayanagara temples, the *makara*, like the elephant, is depicted on the sides of the door steps shrines. It is presented as a well-built, powerful and fierce creature, with a bushy tail and its mouth raised over its back as though it is going to eat something.³⁰ The *salabhanjika* (Pl-89) figures depicted on the door-jambs of *gopura* gateways, in the Vedanarayanaswami temple at Nagalapuram and Govindarajaswami temple at Tirupati are shown as standing on *makara*, probably representing as Ganga figures.

Makara-torana motifs:

The makara-torana is the other important device that is found in the temples under our consideration. The Vijayanagara sculptors used this motif very sparingly. It is found as a canopy of the cult images sculptured on the pillars and the exterior walls. Excellent examples of this type are found on the pillars of the Natya and kalyanamandapas of the Virabhadrasvami temple at Lepakshi and on the exterior walls of the temples at Pushpagiri.

It is also observed that the Vijayanagara sculptors used the makara-toranas to decorate the door-way lintels and the front side of the mahanasikas of the vimanas. The makara-torana found on the lintel of the door-way of the Siva temple

at Vallur and a semi-way has a semi-circular floral arch emerging from the jaws of the makaras, arranged on either side of the lower section of the torana. The curved trunks, the gaping mouth, short and shapely legs and the floral plumage of the makaras are meticulously represented. A very interesting example of a makaratorana is noticed on the front side of the mahanasika of the vimana of the Hazara Rama temple at Hampi. The torana is shown emerging from the mouth of the makaras placed on either side of the bottom and it is surmounted by a huge kirtimukha head.

The makara-torana is noticed in the Mathura school of art and several species of this ornamental motif are preserved in the Mathura and Lucknow museum.³¹ It is likely that these are the earliest representations of the makara-toranas in the plastic art of India. But by taking into consideration the reference to simsumara-sirah in the Mahabharata, V.S. Agarwala observes "The literary tradition of the makara-torana or simsumara-sirah antedates our knowledge of it in the lithic art of the sunga period by several centuries, it is believed that the patterns executed in stone were preceded by work in wood.³²

A graceful makara-torana is noticed in the Saiva temple at Derra, datable to the early Gupta period. An intricately designed floral torana is shown emerging from the mouth of a makara. This mythical animal has scally body and an upraised trunk and head.³³ In the Deccan region the makara-torana ornamented device was used by the early Chalukyas. It is possible that they might have got inspiration and guidance from the Guptas. One of the best examples of this motif is found in the Virupaksha temple at Pattadakal.³⁴ The Rashtrakutas inherited the tradition of employing the makara-torana as an ornamental device from the Early Chalukyas. It is found prominently on the top of the niches and door-ways. The top section of the door-way of the Nandi-mandapa in the Kailasa temple at Ellora is adorned with an exquisitely designed makara-torana.³⁵

In another case a triforium arch is emerging from the mouth of the *makaras* on the top of a niche housing the graceful river godess, Yamuna. Similar *makaratoranas* are also found in the Indra Sabha cave at Ellora. The Eastern Chalukyan and the Later Chalukyan sculptors also profusely patronized this ornamental device. Regarding the *makara-torana* found in the Eastern Chalukyan Art C. Sivaramamurti observes, that when we observe the *makara-torana* decoration over the niches in the

early Pallava temples and compare then with the Eastern Chalukyan at Biccavolu we can understand the parallel development to the north and south of the river Krishna.³⁸

In the first place the ornamental floral plumage of the *makaras* in both the cases is shown flowing down freely along with the pilasters. Secondly the *makaras* are provided with dwarfish riders on their backs. Finally a combination of two *makara* heads with upraised trunks in opposite directions are found on the summit of the *toranas*. The *makara-torana* reached its climax of grace and charm at the hands of the Later Chalukyan and the Hoyasala sculptors. H. Cousens observes: "One of the most frequently occurring decorative forms upon the medieval Hindu temples and more especially in the Chalukyan work of the Canarese districts, is the conventional and highly ornate Makara.³⁹ The *makara-torana* also found a place of prominence in the Kakatiya temples and in main this is very closely akin to the later Chalukyan examples.⁴⁰

In the extreme south India, the makara-torana found favour at the hands of the Pallava and Chola sculptors. An excellent early Pallava example is noticed in a cave at Dalavanur. In this example, as usual, a floral scroll is springing from makaras. But it is curious to note that apart from representing two makarasm, they are shown on the summit of the arch. The makaras are provided with dwarfish gana riders. 41 Similar makara-toranas are found in plenty on the storeyed pyramidal superstructure of the Vethuvan koil at Kalugamalai. 42 The ornamental makaratoranas are also noticed on the top of the niches in the Kailasanathaswami, Vaikunta Perumal temples at Kanchipuram. 43 The Pallava sculptors took very keen interest in introducing certain innovations in the very composition of the makara-torana. Firstly they have inserted human figures in various postures in the flowing plumage of the makaras.44 It may be mentioned in this connection that the plumage of the makaras without human figures are also found in many cases. In the second place human figures and the kirtimukhas are shown springing from the jaws of the makaras instead of floral semi-circular scrolls.45 Gods and goddesses are sculptured in the central circular aperture of these toranas. The makara-torana is used by Chola sculptors for the decoration of the niches, and also the top section of the kudus that

are found on the storeyed and the domical crowing member of the *vimanas* of the Chola-temples.⁴⁶

The makara-torana found in the Vijayanagara temples though in many betrays the influence of Deccan and South Indian traditions. It exhibits certain variations. The arch of the torana is semi-circular or triforium in shape in the Vijayanagara examples. Human figures, Vyalas. Gajas. Hamsas etc., are not found in the Vijayanagara makara-torana where as these are found in the Chola makara-toranas. Further, in the Vijayanagara makara-toranas the ornamental plumage of the makaras are neither elaborate nor freely flowing downwards.

9. Seated Sardula or Simha Motif:

This is another very common ornamental motif found in the Vijayanagara art. This fantastic mythical animal is always shown in a seated posture. It has the face of a lion and human body. But the figures of the hands and legs are provided with long and sharp nails. It is always represented without stretched mane arranged the form of a circle round the head, bulging eyes, gaping mouth, protruding tongue and a long and curved tail. Excellent examples of this type are found at Lepakshi, Hampi, Tadipatri, Pushpagiri, Somapalem temples. A Gopala Rao styled it as "stylized form of Yoga Narasimha.⁴⁷

The simha motif is another ornamental motif found in the *mandapas* of the Srikalahastiswara temple. This animal is always shown in a seated posture. It has the human body and the face of a lion. But the toes of the legs and the fingers of hands have long and sharp nails. It is always shown with outstretched mane, arranged in the form of a circle round the head, bulging eyes, and gaping mouth, protruding tongue and at times with a long and curved tail. In some cases its genital organ is also shown prominently. This fantastic mythical monster is represented on the pedestals of the pillars, adhisthanas of the mandapas and shrines, on the capital mouldings of the pillars and on either side of the door-ways.

This mythical animal motif was not the innovation of the Vijayanagara sculptors. This is found on the top of the capital mouldings of the pillars and below the moulded *kapota* in the rock-cut caves at Bhairavakonda. 49 General modeling and in seated posture, these mythical animals exactly tally with the Vijayanagara

representations. The Pallava sculptors also tried to represent this motif on the base of the pillars and in the sculptured panels.⁵⁰ But in all these cases it is shown with a lions face and body. It looks more like a seated lion. Beautiful representations of seated sardulas or lions are found on the pillar capitals found in a mandapa at Jamidoddi.51 They are very closely akin to the similar representation of animals found in the Vijayanagara temple at Pushpagiri. The seated sardula failed to attract the aesthetic sentiment of the Chola sculptors. But it is represented very rarely. Thus a seated sardula is found on the basal sections of a semi-circular arch found on the top of the Kalyanasundara aspect of Siva in the Umamahesvara temple at Konerirajapuram.⁵² This example though carved on a piece, is exactly the replica of the same motif found in the Vijayanagara temples. It is very curious to note that a seated sardula having the head of a lion and a human body is noticed on the southern exterior wall of the Parasuramesvara temple at Bhuvaneswar.⁵³ We may note here that the close similarity between the seated sardula represented in a cave at Bhairava-konda with that of the Vijayanagara examples tempts us to state that the Vijayanagara sculptors drew inspiration and guidance from the Vishnukundins.54

IV. Jumping Creatures:

1. Monkey:

Over the cornices of temples the monkey is depicted in leaping postures in the Govindaraja temple at Tirupati and Sri Venkateswara temple at Tirumala. The Vedanarayana temple at Nagalapuram, the Bugga Ramalingeswara temple at Tadipatri have a number of monkey figures all jovial and merry. In the Bugga Ramalingeswara temple a monkey is shown holding a fruit in its hand. Hanuman, the faithful and devoted servant of Rama, who is raised to the status of a god, has a number of his figures in the Vaishnavite temples. The Vedanarayana temple at Nagalapuram has a carving which depicts the duel between Vali and Sugriva, the monkey chieftains, the monkey figures largely found in the temples of Rayalaseema. 55

2. Deer:

Deers appear in plenty in Lepakshi paintings of the kiratarjuniya story and in the hunting scenes portrayed on the prakara walls of the Mallikarjna temple at Srisailam. In these examples herds of deers are represented as galloping here and there. In one panel at Srisailam however two deers are shown lying at ease. The Lepakshi temple has the deer as a decorative motif on the pillars of its kalyanamandapa.

V. Flying Creatures:

Birds like the parrot, peacock, swan, crane and eagle are found in the form of friezes as well as individual birds in the temples of the Rayalaseema region.

1. The Parrot:

The women of the Vijayanagara period were fond of pet birds. The parrot was a favourite pet bird as is evident from some of the sculptures in the temples of Rayalaseema. The *Manucharitra* also refers to the parrot as a favourite pet bird of courtesan. There is a female figure feeding parrots on a pillar of the *maha-mandapa* of the Chintala Venkataramana temple, the *kalyanamandapa* of the Lepakshi temple which has a bas relief of parrot on a pillar.

2. The Peacock: (Pl-90, 91)

This beautiful bird is the vahana of Kartikeya, and in the Saivite temples carvings of Kartikeya, and the peacocks are found. The best example of this figure is found at Srikalahastiswara temple. Generally, in these carvings the peacock is seen near Kartikeya. The hunting scene carved on the *prakara* walls of the Srisailam temple has the bas-relief of peacocks in a group. A bas-relief of the peacock is found on a pillar of the *Kalyanamandapa* at Lepakshi but here it is portrayed as a decorative motif. The paintings of Lepakshi illustrating the story of *Kiratarjunniyam* have peacocks in the forest scenes. Hence they are portrayed in a realistic manner unlike the stylized stone carvings of the peacock at *Srisalam*. 56

3. The Swan:

The bird swan was described as the vahana of Goddess Saraswathi. According to *Manasara* the swan is the vehicle of Brahma too. Its feathers are all white, its feet red, at its beak golden, the swan is a symbolic figure, and it is also rendered in the temples. In the *kalyanamandapa* of Virabhadra temple at Lepakshi, there is an apsara figure who is half human and half-swan. She is human above the

waist and swan below it. The swan portion is depicted with short legs. The features of the tail are beautifully carved.⁵⁷

4. The Crane or Duck:

The krishnaleela panels in the temples include episode of Bakasura vadha described in the Bhagavatha. According to it one day Krishna was sitting on the bank of the river Yamuna, a huge crane, with sharp and pointed beak, attacked him. The bird was no other than a demon called Bakasura disguised as a crane. Krishna caught hold of the beaks of the gigantic crane, tore them apart and thus killed. 58

The carvings of the Bakasura episode are many, a pillar on the porch in front of the maha-mandapa of the Vedanarayana temple at Nagalapuram has a sculpture of Chaturbhuja Krishna killing a Bakasura. Here the four headed Krishna is shown pulling apart the beaks of the crane with his lower hands, as he pegs down with his left leg of the body of the bird and holds it. The corridor around the main shrine of Nagalapuram has the same episode. Ducks are carved as decorative motifs on pillars.

5. Gandabherunda: (Pl-92,93)

The Gandabherunda which is a two-headed mythical bird, found a place in the temples of Rayalaseema region. The Vijayanagara king Kirhnsadevaraya is said to have been the Gandabherunda to his enemies. During the reign of Achutaraya, the Gandabherunda holding elephants in its beak and claws was embossed on his gold coins. This mythical symbolic bird appears only occasionally in the sculptures.⁵⁹

The carvings of Gandabherunda are found in the Vedanarayana temple at Nagalapuram and the Mallikarjuna temple at Srisailam. The Gandabherunda at Nagalapuram temple holds in its two beaks two elephants. A similar figure is found on the prakara wall of the Mallikarjuna temple, Srisailam. The elephants here are portrayed in a state of helplessness, utter misery and anguish, and the body of the Gandabherunda is given a human form.

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Chapter – VII Conclusion

XONO

CONCLUSION

The Ornamentation and Decorative motifs are primarily meant for the beautification of secular and sacerdotal structures. These decorative devices helps to measure not only the aesthetic sense and artistic skills of the sculptures but also the cultural makeup of the people who lived in a particular period and region respectively.

Indian architecture at all times remarkable for the profuseness of its applied decoration at the stage of its development, reached the extreme limit of florid magnificence. The temple builders have opted wall surfaces, ceilings and pillars for the decorative motifs and made magnificent contribution in this direction. As such, the ornamentation and decorative motifs played a vital role in the art history of India.

The primitive man was not an exception in exposing magnificent workmanship through his lithe implements and paintings. Though subsequent periods followed the conventional material i.e. wood as the medium of construction, the sources clearly show their aesthetic values of through the perishable material. Credit goes to the Mauryan emperors, who had choosen stone as the medium of construction. Thus the monolithic pillars at Rampurva, Lauriya Nandangarh and Saranath stood as a challenge to their remarkable high workmanship. They have elicited the highest praise from all the art critics of the world.

Gupta period witnessed a sublime idealism combined with a highly developed sense of Rhythm and beauty in contemporary sculptures. There are vigour and refinement in their design and execution. But the decorative element, which characterises the art of succeeding ages is secondary.

Temple construction became wide spread during the medieval period in Rayalaseema. Prior to the medieval period, Rayalaseema region was renowned for Buddhist architecture. The *stupas*, coins, *Viharas* and *Chaityas* stood for their artistic excellence including decorative motifs and ornamentation. The growth of *Brahmanical* religion is also remarkable for the production of *Hindu* caves and temples. They also stand as good examples for the high workmanships and decorative element.

The temples of Renaticholas at Naguru, Veldurti, Chilakameru, Malepadi, Peddamudiyam contain Padabandha type of Adhishtana, walls with pilasters, niches topped by makara toranas, bhutamala in the prastara region. The super structure of the temples are profusely decorated with Vidyadharas, apsaras and divinities. The Nolambavadi style recalls the Andhra-Karnataka tradition. The mixed usage of the bhutagana, hamsa and animals is a characteristic feature of the Nolamba temples. The figures like Ganga, Yamuna, Dvarapalas and Rhishis seated on elephants are carved at the base of the door jambs.

A bewildering variety of art motifs viz. human, animal, floral, geometrical, mythical, etc. are frequently noticed in the temples of Rayalaseema region. The sculptural art of the Vijayanagara shows the popularity of relief sculptures in the temple art of Rayalaseema. The Vijayanagara temples have rich ornamentation and decorative motifs particularly pillars give not only depth and aesthetic sense to the interior of the temple but also provide ample scope for the sculptors to carve various designs and motifs on these pillars. The plan, size, shape and the beauty of temples depend very much upto the inter columniation of the pillars which the Vijayanagara temples display a bewildering variety of pillars. The Chola pillar design with less decoration has been transformed into the most elegant one by the Vijayanagara sculptures by introducing decorative motifs and designs. The Nagabandham motif (Snake-hood) at the bottom square part of the Vijayanagara pillar is an innovation of Vijayanagara school of art. The yali-bracket pillar is the most highly ornamental column in the Vijayanagara style and the amount of labour and cost involved in its construction should really be enormous. The inspiration of the Yali-bracket, which is found prominently in Vijayanagara architecture seems to have been derived from the Kakatiya style. It is a new feature not noticed before.

The Indian, sculptors-Buddhist, Jain and Hindu employed a bewildering variety of art motifs viz. Flora-Fauna, human, geometrical, mythical, etc. the overall effect of wall decorations under study is harmony and balance revealing synthesis of the whole structure. Both plain and decorative kapotas are found in the gopura gateways of the Vijayanagara temples. The super structure and the wall section of the gopura gateway is normally separated by a kapota. In the fully advanced gopura gateways of the Vijayanagara period, kapotas are adorned with projected rows of

plain semi-circular projections, simhalalata kudus, ribbed mouldings, dancing figures, mimiature pavilians, couchant sardulas and geometrical designs.

Adding beauty to the Vijayanagara art, the artist meticulously portrayed the door jams of the temple with floral creeper designs forming into circles. These floral creepers are shown emanating from *makaras*. In the circles of this creeper are carved many miniature sculptures depicting gods, men and women in various dancing poses and playing on musical instruments. At the bottom of each door jamb, there is a graceful female figures as hording a creeper.

The Vijayanagara sculptors depict profuse mastery over feminine anatomy and form. Woman with a creeper represents the ancient *Dohada* motif. This is one of the oldest and the most frequently used figures, used as decorative motif in the Indian art. This motif was first used by the Buddhist artists. Similar type of *salabhanjikas* of the sanchi *toranas* are one of the earliest examples of the lady and free motif in the Indian art. This motif is said to have been used as a symbolic significance of fertility by the Buddhist and Jain sculptors. But the Brahmanical sculptors, who inherited it from them depicted it purely as an ornamental motifs without any attention to the underlying element of fertility.

Makara torana motif is carved by a Vijayanagara sculptors as a canopy of the cult images, sculptures on the pillars and on the exterior walls. The plumage and the raised trunks of the makaras and the riders are pleasingly delineated in the said temples of Rayalaseema. Particularly, the Vijayanagara sculptures used the makaratoranas to decorate the doorway lintels and the front side of the mahanasikas of the vimanas. The makara-torana motif had been utilized as decorative art since the times of Jainism and Buddhism. The kumbha punjaras adorning the walls of the said temples are of two types viz. with foliages and without foliages. However, it is quite conspicuous that the Vijayanagara temples borrowed the wall decorations from the Pallavas and Hoyasalas.

The Vijayanagara architects, with the intention of maintaining new variety and novelty might have adopted the big and small koshtas in the gala section. Final stage of artistic development of upapitha of the gopura gateway is found at Tadpatri (Bugga Ramalingeswara Temple). Here, the upana is decorated with a series of miniature shrines resembling almost the Hoyasala temples at Belur. Halebid and

Somanathapur. Thus, the climax of the decorative art of the Vijayanagara period is noticed in the adhishtanas of the northern and southern gateways of the Ramalingeswara temple at Tadipatri. The multiple mouldings are decorated with friezes of dwarfish ganas (bharavahikas), pillared pavillions, multi-storeyed miniature models of shrines, stylised hamsas, full-blown lotus flowers, horses, dances, musicians, gods and goddesses, ornamental kudus with human heads inside, geometrical and floral patterns, etc. They are considered to be the best and most highly ornate adhishtanas in the entire gopura gateways of the Vijayanagara temples. The adhishtanas of the Vijayanagara style at Tadipatri combined the principle of simplicity and elegance avoiding voluptuousness. They are devoid of over-decoration as in the case of the Hoyasala temples.

The Vijayanagara artist has given ample space to provide the carving of animals (both domestic as well as wild) and birds in plastic art of the temples. They are carved with great ease fidelity to nature and unfailing vitality. The sculptors undoubtedly inspired by the traditions and beliefs concerning the animals and birds and most of them have been established as religious symbols connecting to some deities or divine beings.

The figures of animals and birds are introduced in the appropriate places either as vehicle of particular gods and goddesses and in a few cases independently for the sake of their decorative value. They are done in low relief and show the qualities of painting and appear as if sculptors simply chiseled away chips of stone to discover the forms imprisoned in the rock. The forms of birds are all stylised and done in low relief.

Hunting scenes as decorative motifs also formed part of the component parts of the temples under review. These examples are no exceptions with stylised forms of the animal figures. However, wild animals of different types are portrayed without any direct reference to their mythical association. In many an instance, the forms of birds are all stylised and done in low relief.

The animal represe4ntations of the temples can be divided into realistic and mythical. The snakes, many a number, are represented more often in their mythical and symbolic attributes than as creatures in nature. The lion is used as a decorative motif in the Vijayanagara temples. It is similar to its Pallava proto-type and Vishnu

kundins. It is quite conspicuous that the elephant became a favourite animal to the South Indian craftsmen. Inspite of its depiction as the vehicle of Indra, it constitutes a prominent decorative motif, particularly as elephant friezes in the temples under review. It is likely that Vijayanagara craftsmen borrowed the features of depicting elephant friezes form their predecessors i.e. hoyasalas.

Wild boar is represented as a royal emblem and also as a decorative motif in the temples under review. It is important to note that the cow is regarded more as holy and worshipped, but rarely found as more decorative motif. The Dog is only found along with *Bhairava* form of *Siva* but not as a decorative motif nor as a domestic pet creature.

The crocodile, appears more as a decorative motif in the temple art of Rayalaseema. It has been conventionally associated with sanctity. It occurs profusely in the early Indian art motif. It is observed that the Vijayanagara sculptors used the makara toranas to decorate the doorway lintels and the front side of the mahanasikas of the vimanas. The makara torana motif of Mathura School of Art is the earliest representation in the plastic art of India. In the Deccan region the makara — torana ornamented device was used by the early Chalukyas. The makara — torana motif reached its climax of grace and charm at the hands of the later Chalukyan and the Hoyasala sculptors. The Vijayanagara sculptor broughtout certain variations in depicting makara torana motif. The arch of the torana is semicircular or triforium in shape. Human figures, vyalas, gajas and Hamsas are not found in this motif. There are no elaborate ornamental plumage.

Seated sardula or simha motif as a decorative motif is shown as a mythical lion with human body and the face of a lion. This motif was not Vijayanagara artist's innovative, but found in the rock-cut caves at Bhairava Konda. However, it states that the Vijayanagara sculptors drew inspiration from the Vishnukundins.

The parrot as a favourite pet bird in the Vijayanagara period is shown as a decorative motif in temples under review. The peacocks, portrayed as a decorative motif is represented both in a realistic manner as well as stylised manner.

The representation of gandharvas in Indian art was first initiated by Buddhist sculptors. In the Vijayangara representation of the Gandharvas as decorative motif

are devoid of wings and not in a flying attitude. They are mostly shown playing on musical instruments. The Vijayanagara sculptors inherited the tradition of using the impish dwarfs and decorative devices either from the Pallavas or from the Cholas. The Vijayanagara sculptors represented the dwarfs as decorative motifs with corpulent bodies. But, in some cases, they are shown with pleasing anatomical features and even adorned with kiritamakutas.

The above description clearly reveals the fact that the ornamentation and decorative motifs reached their zenith in the Vijayanagara temples of Rayalaseema. Though, the Vijayanagara sculptors adopted certain features of ornamentation and decorative motifs from their predecessors, they have made certain innovations to enrich the aesthetic values and grace of the temples under review.

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Glossary of Technical Terms

GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS

Adhishthana : The adhishthana or sole is an essential member of a

temple. It is placed generally above the upapitha.

Antarala : Vestibule. It is in the form of a chamber usually infront

of the santum sanctorum.

Ardha-mandapa : Compartment infront of the main hall of the temple.

Ardhoruka : Drawers

Chitra – torana : A decorative device above a niche.

Cyma - recta: Moulding in an outline of two curves. Cyma recta, the

concave curve surmounts the convex. Cyma-reversa,

the convex surmounts the concave.

Deva-koshtha : Stands for niches containing divinities in stipulated

forms and directions, as enjoined in the texts.

Dhvaja-stambha: Flag - staff in the temple

Dipa-stambha : Lamp pillar

Gaja-prishthakriti : Shaped like an elephant's back or whale-backed. It

applies to the superstructure of some of the Pallava

rockcut rathas and the early chalukyan temples.

Gaia-simha : Elephant and lion motif

Gala: Neck. It is normally found in between two mouldings.

Sometimes it is cut into small compartments by employing miniature stambhikas and decorated with

vajra-bandha motifs.

Garbhagriha : Sanctum sanctorium

Gopura : Oblong structure above the entrance of a p0rakara.

This is one of the most distinctive features of a Dravidian temple. The Cholas, Pandyas and the Vijayanagara architects erected imposing gopura-

dvaras infront of the temples erected by them

Kalasa : Round pinnacle

Kalvana - mandapa : Pillared hall where the marriage of the divine couple is

celebrated annually.

Kapota : Cornice

Kudya-stambhas: Pilasters. They are found normally on the exterior of

the garbhagriha and antarala, on either side of the doorframes and below the ornamental toranas of the niches.

Kuta: Miniature shrine, square throughout.

Kuta - Koshtha : Niche surmounted by a kuta.

Maha - Mandapa : , Great hall normally Located beyond the mukha-

mandapa.

Makara -torana : Decorative device above the niche with makara at ends

with plumes hanging below. It is noticed sometimes

above the sculptured panels.

Mandapa : Pillared hall

Mukha-mandapa : Porch, situated generally infront of the maha-mandapa.

Natya mandapa : Dancing hall

Pada : Wall part, above the adhishthana and below the

comice.

Padma : It stands for the Cymarecta of the Western usage. It is

usually found on the upapitha, adhishthana, asvapada, abacus and kudya-stambha of the Northern, Southern

and Deccan temples.

Pattika : Plain band

Phalaka : Square plank like member.

Prakara : A wall erected around the main temple or temple

complex

Prastara : Entablature

Purna-ghata : A pot filled with water as auspicious sign of plenty

Pushpa-potika : Lotus bud hanging below the extend pat (arm) of a

pillar capital.

Sala : Miniature rectangular shrine with wagon-vaulted roof.

Salabhanjika : A female figure. These female figures are used, in the

ancient and mediaeval temples, to support the massive eaves of the sabha-mandapa. The earliest use of this device is noticed in the Buddhist toranas at Sanchi. They are found, in the form of mandanikas, in the Later

Chalukyan and the Kakatiya temples.

Sala-koshtha : Niche surmounted by sala-sikhara

Sikhara: Cupola or the part above the griva or neck and below

the kalasa.

Stambhika : Pilaster

Tala : Storey or tier.

Taranga : Navy or roll corbel

Torana : This is an ornamental device used either in a free-

standing manner or in relief.

Upapitha : The lowest member of a temple. It is an optional

member.

Vedika : Balustrade

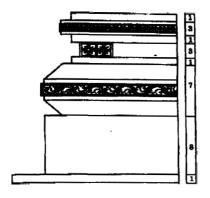
Vimana : Tower rising above the sanction or garbhagriha

Vvali : Leograph or lion-griffin.

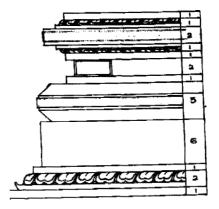
Illustrations

A. Figures

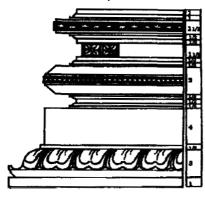
FIGURES



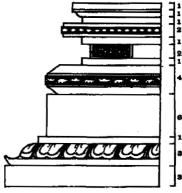
1. (A) Padabandha Adhistana



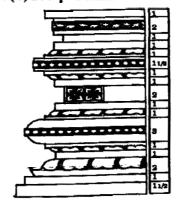
1. (B) Padmabandha Adhistana



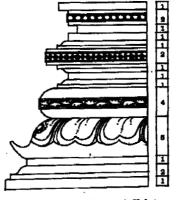
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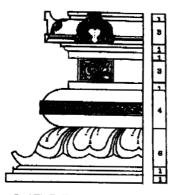
1. (D) Sronibhandha Adhistana



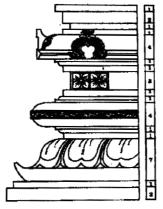
2. (A) Sri Soundarya Adhistana



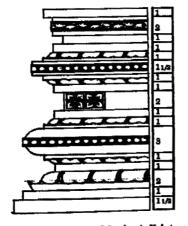
2. (B) Skandha Kanta Adhistana



2. (C) Srikanta Adhistana



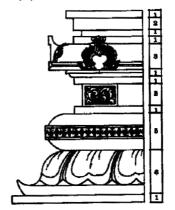
3. (A) Sribhandha Adhistana



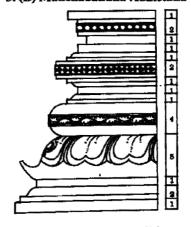
3. (C) Sundharambhuja Adhistana



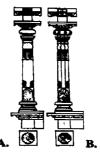
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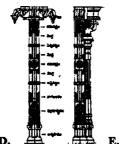
3. (B) Manchabandha Adhistana



3. (D) Ambhujakantha Adhistana



4. (A) Rudra Kantha (B) Vishnu Kantha



4. (D) Chitrakanta Sthambha, (E) Sundu Pada Sthambha



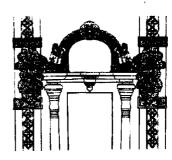
4. (C) Bramha Kantha



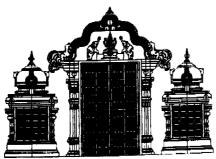
4. (F) Daru Sthambha



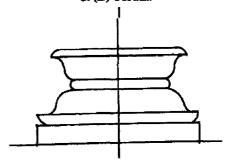
5. (A) Torana



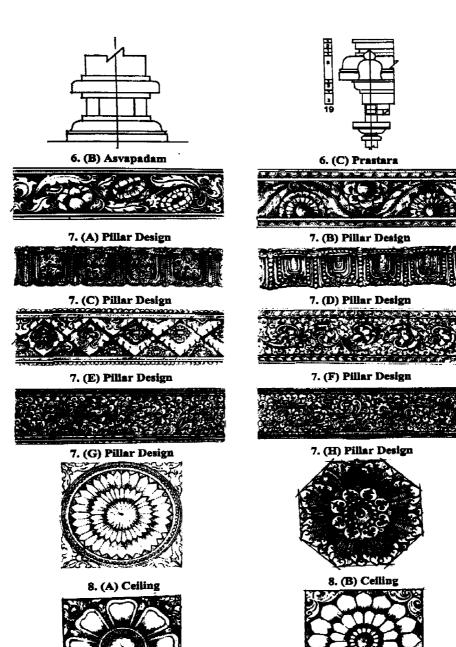
5. (B) Torana



5. (C) Torana



6. (A) Asvapadam Pillar



8. (C)Ceiling

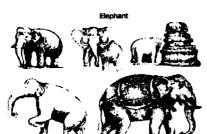
8. (D) Ceiling



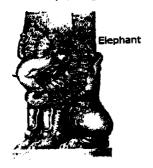
9. (A) Naga Bhandam



9. (C) Snake and Peacock



10. (A) Elephant



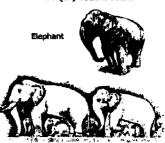
10. (C) Elephant



9. (B) Naga Bhandam



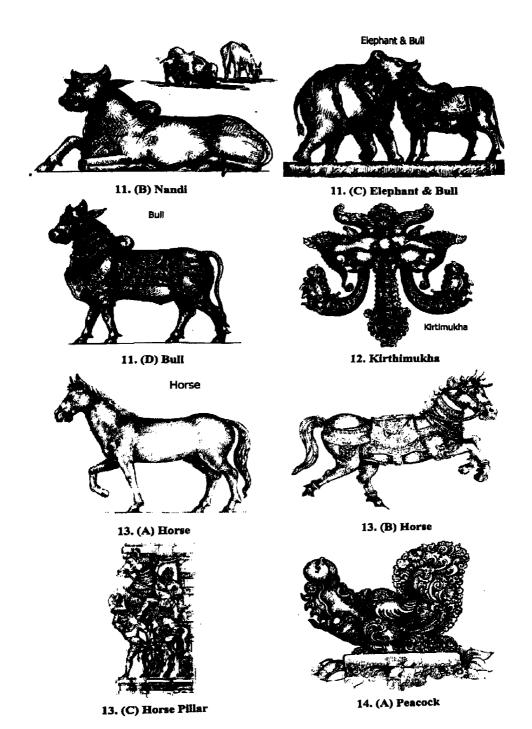
9. (D) Adi Seshu

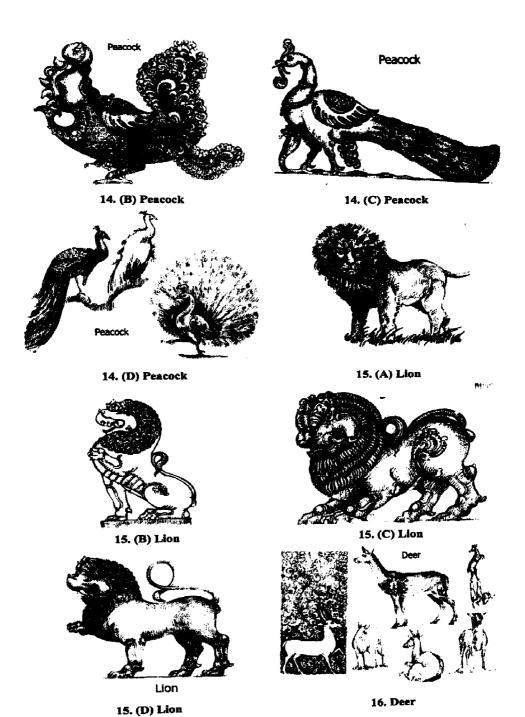


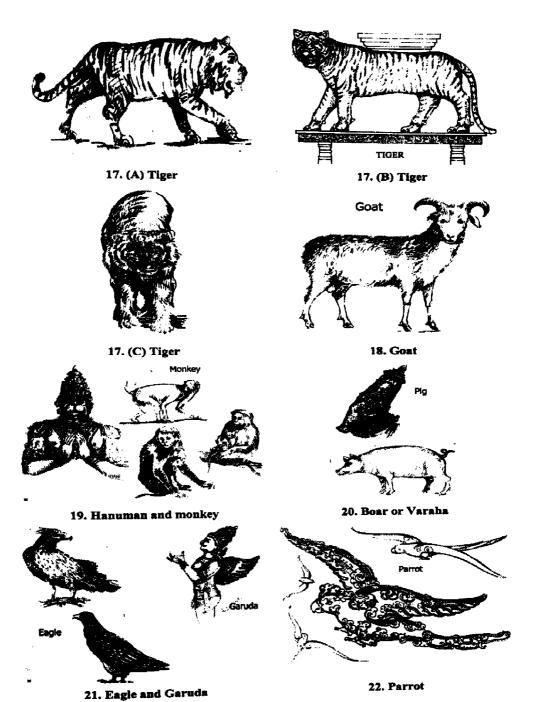
10. (B) Elephant

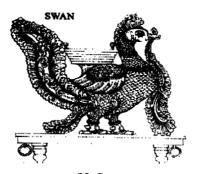


11. (A) Bull





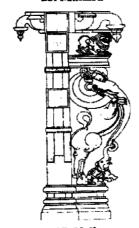




23. Swan



25. Makara



27. Yali



24. Kamadhenu



26. Duck



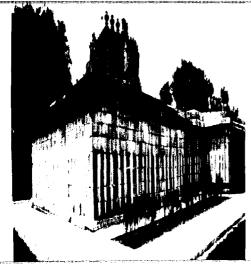
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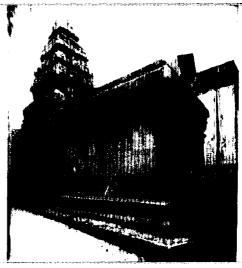
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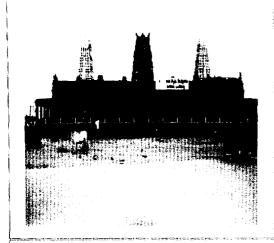




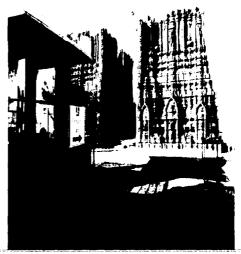
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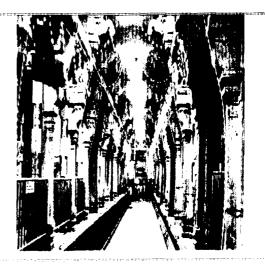
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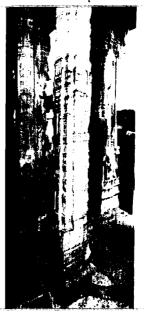
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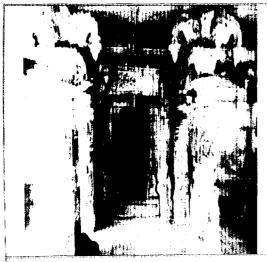
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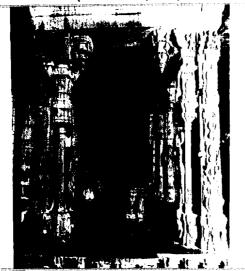
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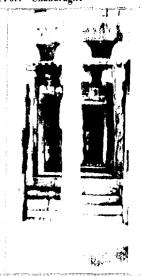
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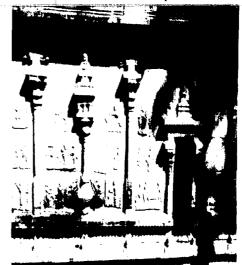
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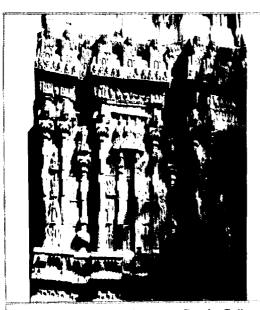
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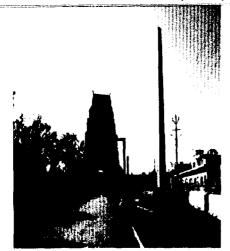
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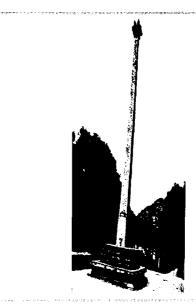
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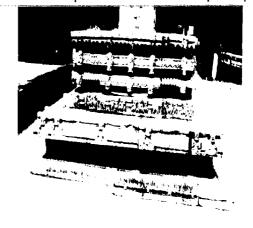
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Pl-20. Monolithic Dipastambha – Chennakesava Temple Somapalem



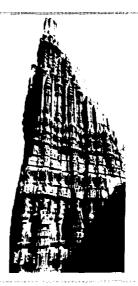
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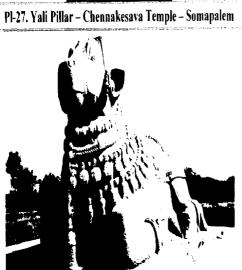


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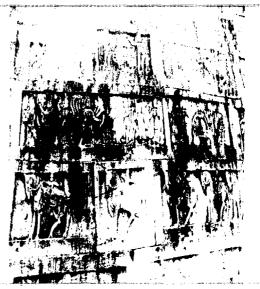


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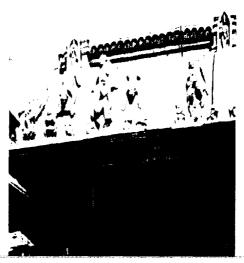




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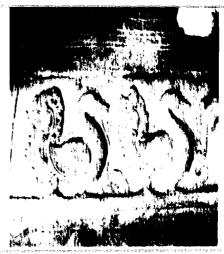
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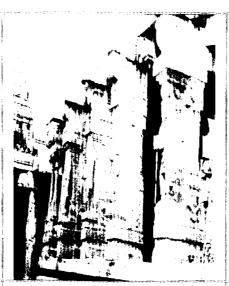
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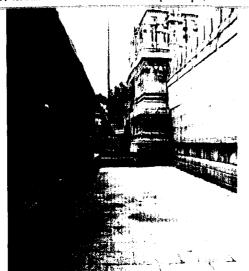
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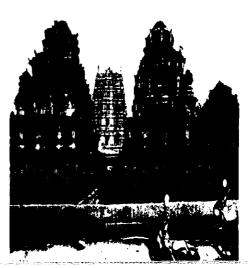
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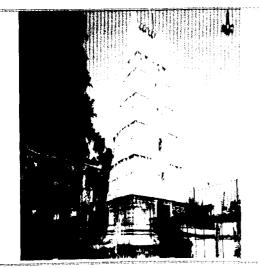
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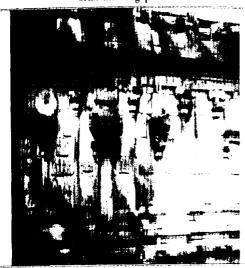
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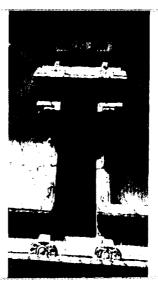
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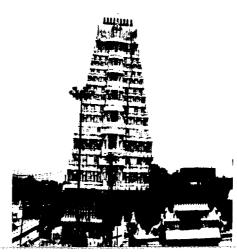
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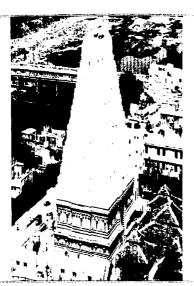
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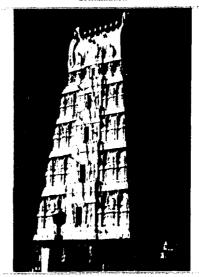
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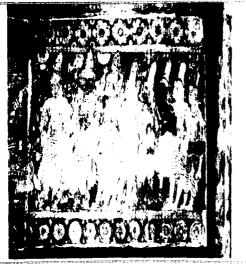
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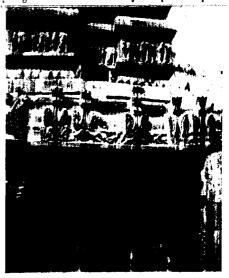
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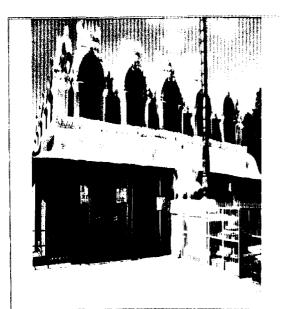
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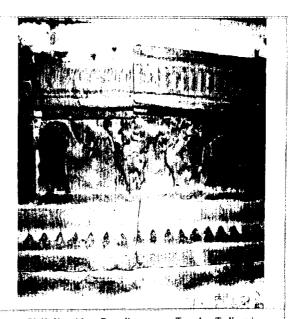
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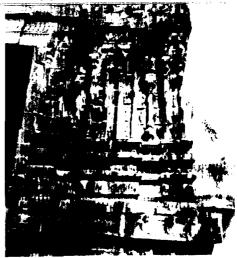
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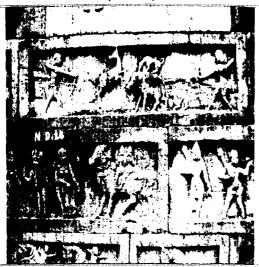
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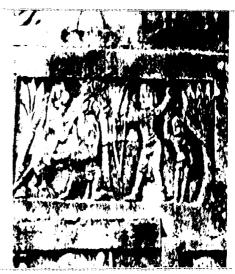
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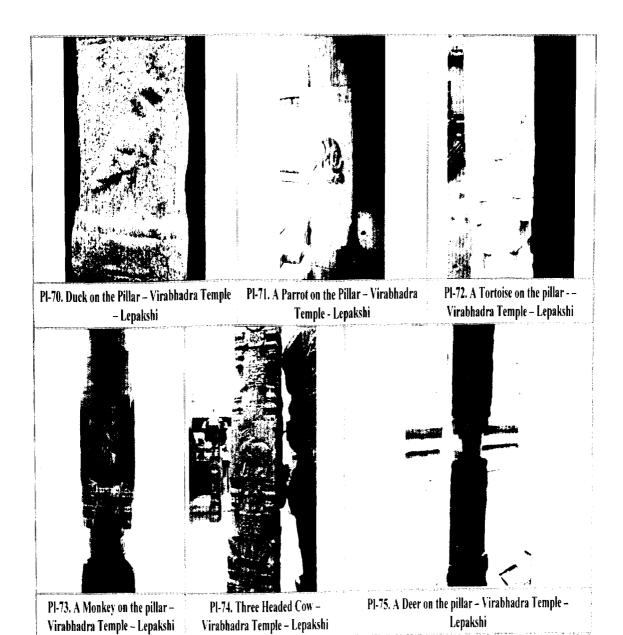
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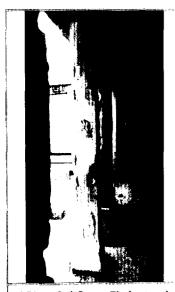


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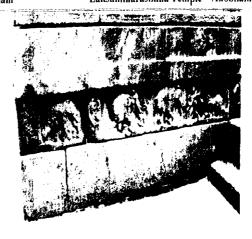
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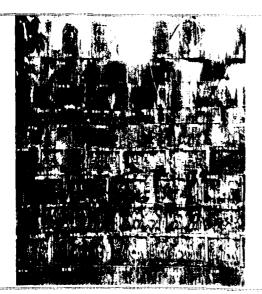
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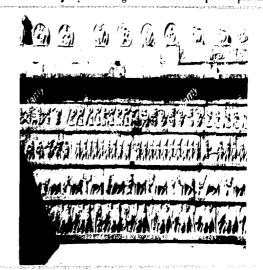
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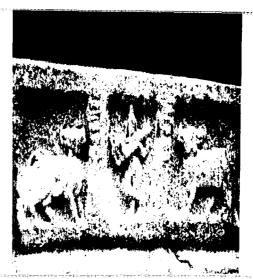
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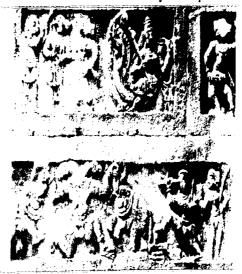
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A Unique Dampathya Dakshinamurthi

V. Namarolina

Surutapalli is a small village in the Nagalapuram Mandal of Chittoor District. The village is situated at a distance of 14 km. from Nagalapuram on the Chennai-Tirupati Road. Nagalapuram which was named after Nagaladevi, the mother of Sri Krishnadevaraya. There is a temple of Vedanarayanaswamy at Naglapuram built by Krishnadevaraya.

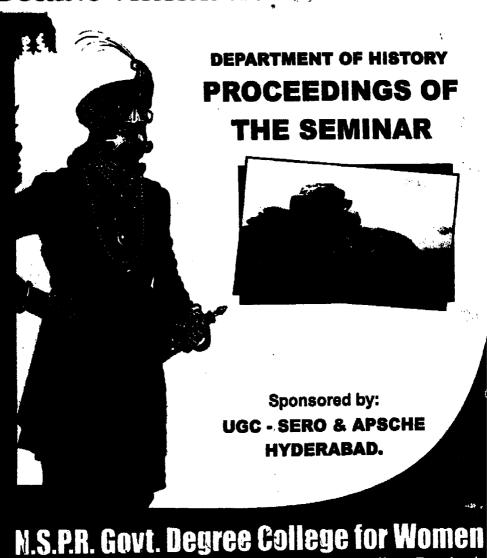
Suruttapalli village is famous for a temple dedicated to Siva, with the name of "Pallikondiswaraswami". The village is referred to in the puranas as Suruttapalli. In this temple there is a sculpture of Dakshinamurthi, carved in the niche on the south wall of Garbhagriha of Valmikeswara temple. Generally Dakshinamurthi is viewed in four different aspects namely Vyakyana Dakshinamurthi, Gnana Dakshinamurthi, Yoga Dakshinamurthi, Vinadhara Dakshinamurthi. Of these the first form is the one which is most frequently found in the temples of both Saiva and Vaishnava.

Dakshinamurthi Upanishad and the Suthasamhitha give the estoteric meaning of the figure of Dakshinamurthi. It is stated that he is the Supreme God of whole universe and remains resplenent with joy. Gnana is also known as Dakshina. The Apasmarapurusha under his foot is the personifica-

tion of the ignorance of the living beings.

However the Dampathya Dakshinamurthi is so far not found elsewhere. Hence this sculpture is unique in manyways. Here Siva is shown seated on Padmapitha which in turn is placed on a hill top. He is scated with his right leg hanging below and resting on Apasmarapurusha. The left leg is bent at knee and rests on the Padmapitha. The God has four hands. The upper hands hold mriga (Deer) and anukusa. While the lower right hand is shown in Vyakyanamudra and the lower left in Varada and also resting on the left knee. Devi is represented behind the left shoulder of the God and holding left hand of the God below the shoulder part with her left hand. Interestingly Nandi, the vehicle of the God is shown behind the Pitha. Two rishis are sculptured seperately at the bottom and seated on either side of the central figure. Siva has Jatamakuta. The jatas are shown emanating from his head all around. He wears Patra and Chakra Kundalas, Yagnopavitha, Three haras. Padavalavas. Udarabandha. Devi wests Kiritamakuta and various Haras. Thus the sculpture of Dakshina murthi in this temple is unique. Basing on the style of the sculptures and the architectural features this temple may be assigned to the late Vijayanagara pe-

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DECORATIVE MOTIFS IN THE LEPAKSHI TEMPLE

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The Vijayanagara empire represents the last great phase in the history and culture of South India. The Vijayanagara emperors in general and Krishnadevaraya and Achyutaraya in particular were great builders. The countless structures, both secular and sacerdotal that are sprinkled through out the length and breadth of South India amply attest the matchless building activity of the Vijayana emperors.

The lofty and grand Vijayanagara monuments are found at places Lepakshi, Hampi, Penugonda, Tadipatri, Pushpagiri, Vontimitta, Vallur, Vel Markapuram, Somapalem, Tirupati, Kalahasti, Chidambaram, Srir Ahobilam and Srisailam.

The Vijayanagara temples are studied with ornamental and demotifs. The temple walls, ceilings, doorways, Kalyana-mantapas are adorned with Floral designs, geometrical designs, animal motifs, birds. figures, sen^divine figures etc.

Lepakshi is a small village, situated eight miles to the east of the headquarters of a taluk of that name in the Anantapur District Pradesh. The Virabhadra Swamy temple at Leapakshi is a museum Vijayanagara style of architecture and art. It is a veritable treasure Vijayanagara sculptures and paintings¹.

A. Wall Decorations:

The wall is that portion of the gopuradvara which is above the and below the kapota or the cornice. The Vijayanagara architects used methods to embellish it. The best examples of this type are found at Somapalem, Hampi, Rayachoti etc². In the second stage a thick horizontal decorated with deeply incised lines is shown running round the central section.

wall portion. In the next stage of its evolution pilasters with Vijayanagara* capitals and panjara motifs are found on the wall of the gopura gateways. This is very well illustrated by the walls of the gopuradvara of the Virabhadra Swami temple at

B. Doorways:

The gopura gateways are provided with either plain or highly omate rectangular door ways. The door-jambs and the lintels of the door-ways are decorated with floral designs, dwarfish ganas, figure sculptures illustrating the avataras of Vishnu, seated Sardulas etc.

The door-way of the gopura gateway of Virabhadraswami temple at Lepakshi has two massive jambs on either side surmounted by and imposing lintel. The jambs and the lintel are decorated with a prominent meandering floral creeper and miniature figure sculptures. On either side bottom of these door-jambs, graceful female figures holding creepers are represented.

C. Ceilings:

The Ceilings are also one of the Principal features of temple interior. The Vijayanagara sculptors paid special attention in making the central ceilings of the Natya-mandapas, Sabha-mandapas and Kalyana-mandapas highly decorative and charming. In the Natya-mandapa of the Virabhadra Swami temple at Leapakshi a set of three massive and projecting brackets adorned with the characteristic Vijayanagara Pushpa-Potikas are arranged on each corner of the celing⁵.

D. Human Figures:

Quite a large number of sculptures of human figures are found in the Vijayanagara temples a good number of sculptures of sages and saiva devotees like Kannappanayanar Markandeya, Siriyala and Mrigavyadha are found on the pillars and wall portions of Lepakshi temple. The female figure is particularly carefully

carved in these temples. The figure of women standing holding a creeper found at entrances of the gopuras of the Lepakshi temple⁶.

E. Female Figures:

The Silpa-Prakasa states that as a house without wife, as a play woman, so without the figure of a woman the monuments will be of inferior and bear no fruit. The Indian sculptors since the early centuries of Christian peerless attention in the depiction of female figures as ornamental appreciations edifice. Through the Vijayanagara sculptors were no match Chalukyan, Hoyasala, Kakatiya, Pallava and Chola artists in the delineation of form in the multiple postures and positions, yet they showed some amount of they are represented in different postures and in different places. In the first beautiful female figures standing in cross-legged postures are found carved lower sections of the gopura dvaras. They normally stand on a mythical makara canopied by an exquisitely carved meandering floral creeper. Examples of this are found at Lepakshi temple.

The lady at toilet is another most popular decorative motif that is found in ancient and medieval temples. The Vijayanagara sculptors took very keen into in the representation of this female decorative motif. An excellent example of type is carved an one of the pillars of Kalayanamandapa of the Virabhadra Systemple at Lepakshi⁹.

F. Dwarfs:

The impish dwarfs as monumental decorations are some of the most beautiful products of plastic art of India. They are normally represented with scanty pot-like prominent bellies, bulging eyes and adorned with Udara-bandhas, ekavalis, wristlets, anklets, short turban etc. It is very interesting to note here that in some cases they are represented with pleasing anatomical features and even adorned with Kiritamakutas examples of this type are found on the adhishtana of the Narva-

mandapa of Virabhadra Swami temple at Lepakshi. The pillars of the Lepakshi temple contain human figures, flying Gandarvas, birds as decorative motifs. Some pillars are interestingly orinmented with geometrical designs like circle, Crisscross Designs, squarer, Rectangular motifs, over lapping circles etc.

F. Makara-torana:

The makara-torana is the other important device that is found in the temples. The Vijayanagara sculptors used this motifs very sparingly. It is found as a canopy of the cult images sculptured on the pillars and on the exterior walls. Excellent examples of this type are found on the pillars of the Natya and Kalayana-mandapas of the Virabhadraswami temple at Lepakshi¹⁰.

G. Seated Sardula Motif:

The seated Sardula Motif is very common ornamental motif found in the Vijayanagara art this fantastic mythical animal is always shown in a seated posture. It has the face of a lion and human body. But the figures of the hands and legs are provided with long and sharp nails. The excellent examples of this type are found at Lepakshi¹¹.

H. Gandharvas:

The Vijayanagara sculptors and painters took sufficient interest and care in the representation of semi-divine celestrial musicians. Some extremely interesting examples are carved on the pillers of the Virabhadraswami temple at Lepakshi. The Vijayanagara painters also represented Gandharvas and Apsaras in the paintings. Two excellent examples are found in the Vijayanagara paintings at Lepakshi. They are playing on the musical instruments and they are depicted in flying mode¹²

I. Animals and Birds:

There are many representations of animals and birds in the Lepakshi temple. For example the Dikpala figures are represented in the incomplete mantapas of the Lepakshi temple their vahanas or vehicles are very well depicted. On the ceiling of the Mukha-mandapa before the Virabhadra shrine at Lepakshi, there is a large painting of Virabhadra, right below which are painted the dkikpalas on their vahanas. Indra riding an elephant, Agni a ram, yama a buffalo, Varuna a makara, Vayu a deer, Kubera a horse, Isana a bull and Nairuta a man¹³. Monkeys and Swans are abundantly used as decorative metifs on cornice and wall portions. A. Gopal Rammentions several birds and animals depicted on the pillars of the Virabhadra Swans temple at Lepakshi. He says in the style of Vijayanagara freedom is seen among the forms of animals sculptured on the pillars of Kalayana-mandapa, the Mukha-mandapa and on the walls of the Ardha-mandapa¹⁴.

A near realistic bas-relief of a snake charmer and his snake is found on a piller of the Kalayanamandapa of the Lepakshi temple. He is seen playing in his pipe while snake is dancing with its raised hood in the basket. The snake is also seen as a ear ornaments (Sarpakundalas), Yagnopavita, Bracelet, Girdle etc.

Nagayagnopavitas are found on the carvings of Siva and Ganapathi figures at the temple of Lepakshi¹⁵.

Conclusion:

On the whole, the Lepakshi temple is amply adorned with decorated motifs like human figures, divine carvings, semi-divine figures, half-human. half-animals motifs (ambiguon animals) geometrical designs, dwrafs figures etc. Some of these decoratives are continuation of their predecessors like cholas. Some innovation designs are also followed by Vijayanagara artists. Lotus design on the ceilings of the Vijayanagara temple is of special attractions.

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DECORATIVE MOTIFS IN THE VIJAYANAGARA TEMPLES

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Indian Art has associated itself with ornamentation and decoration. In every age of artistic development, decorative motifs has been produced with various designs such as line drawings, animal motifs and various symbols. During the Vijayanagara period the decoration was highly skilled with great precision. The craftsmen carved mainly the flowers and twigs, wall decorations, natural sceneries, animals and birds, kirtimukhas or simhalalatas, human figures, figures in erotic poses, semi devine beings like gandharvas, nagas, yakshas and kinneras, dwarts, chaitya arch or kudu motif, Gopura, kumbha panjara, purnakalasa or decorative pilaster, stambikas or pilasters, kudyastambha, udumbara, doorjambs, lintel, patanga, kapota, prostaras and ceilings, makara toranas, etc.

1. Wall decorations

The architects of the Vijayanagara period bestowed great attention on the adhishtanas and built them in many ways. The walls of various members on the axis of the temple which would attack the direct attention of the onlooker assumed an important form from period to period and style to style. These came to be decorated in various ways. A. careful study of this section will reveal that the Vijayanagara architects used several methods to embellish it. In the first instance it is left plain. The best examples of the type are found at Somapalem, Pushpagiri, Rayachoti. The walls of the garbhagriha and antarala of the Lakshmi Narasimha temple of Kadiri, Madhavaraya temple of Gorantla, the Chennakesava Temple of Somapalem, the Virabhadra and Vishnu Shrines of Lepakshi and Virabhadra temple of Rayachoti are plain. In the second stage a thick horizontal bonds with deeply increased lines are carved.

The final stage and highly evolved decorative art of Vijayanagara period can be found on the walls of gopuras of Bugga Ramalingeswara temples at Tadipatri. The pilasters on the walls of Vijayanagara temples found under study are of different varieties.²

- 1. The pilasters are plain with square shaft we can see this variety in the Devi shine of the Kalyanavenkateswara temple at Narayanavanam.
- 2. In some cases the pilasters have rectangular bases and polygonal shaft, we can examine them in the Siva and Rama temples of Penukonda.
- 3. The pilaster having a round shaft fully ornamented with scroll work and with a deity sculpture on the bottom portion of the shaft. This variety we found in the Santanamalleswara temple of Pushpagiri.
- 4. A pilaster with a pillared projecting, we can see this variety on the walls of the main shrine of the Venkataramana Temple at Tadipatri.
- 5. A pilaster surmounted by a Simhalalata Makara torana with deity figures inside torana. This variety is found on the walls of the Siva Temple at Penukonda.
- 6. A pilaster surmounted by a simhalalata citratorana with a lotus in the centre, we can see this type on the walls of the Rama temple of Penukonda. It is clear from the above study that the architects of Vijayanagara Temples borrowed the wall decorations from the Pallavas and Hoyasalas.

2. Human Figures

A large number of sculptures of human figures are found in Vijayanagara tmeples. There appear a good number of sculptures of sages and Saiva devotes like Kannappanayanar, Markandeya, Siriyala and Mrigavyala. The female figures are carefully carved in these temples. The silpa-prakasa states that a house without wife, a play without women and also without the figure of woman the moments will be of interior qualities and bear no fruit. Female figures in Vijayanagara temples represented in different postures and

different places. The beautiful female figures standing in cross-legged postures and found on the lower sections of the gopura-dwaras. They normally stand on a mythical *makara* and canopied by an exquisitely carved meandering floral creeper. Examples of this type are found at Tirupati, Srikalahsti, Somapalem, Lepakshi, Tadipatri, Markapuram, etc.⁴

3. Kirtimukhas or Simhalalatas

The Kirtimukha represents the grotesque head of a lion sometimes with a human face or a dancing figure inside and sometimes with pearls dropping down from its mouth. The Kirtimukha or the head of the lion with pearls dropping down from its mouth is considered to be symbolical representation of the builders which is figuratively taken to be as white as pearls. Typical examples of Kirtimukhas with pearls dropping down from their mouths are those found on the cornice above the walls of the main shrine in the Venkatarama temple of Tadipatri and pillars of Kalyanamanda at Lepakshi. Its final development is noticed on the exterior walls of the Vijayanagara temples at Pusppagiri, Hampi, Penukonda, Chandraigiri, Srikalahasti.

4. Dwarfs

The impish dwarfs are used as monumental decorative devices in the temples. They are one of the most significant and frequently used decorative devices in the Vijayanagra Art, they are found in different positions in different places. It is observed that the Vijayanagara sculptors represented them on the upper edge of the massive and curved cornices of the mukhamandapas, on the Kapota, which is placed on the top of the prasada walls and below the Vimana on the upapithas and adhishtanas of the gopuradwaras and natyamandapas, projected cornice of the shrine doorways, lower section of the kumbha panjaras, pedestals of the sculptures, prastaras of the gopura dwaras, brackets of the pillars etc. in most of the cases they are shown seated and in the act of carrying weight with the head, with the shoulders or with their upraised hands. It is also showed that in some cases they are repressed either sitting or standing or dancing on the pedestals of the images, they are with scanty dress, pot like

prominent bellies, building eyes and adorned with udarabandhas, ekanotis, wristlets, ankelets, short turbans, etc. in some instances they are shown with a pair of tusks on either extreme ends of the mouth. It is very interesting to note that in some cases they are represented with pleasing anatomical features and even adorned with kiritamakutas. Examples of this type are found at Lepakshi and Srikalahsti.

5. Makaratoranas

The Makaratorana is another decorative and important motif found in the Vijayanagra temples, the Vijayanagara sculptors used this motif or device very sparingly. This is carved as a canopy of the cult images sculptured on the pillars and on the exterior walls. Examples of this type are found on the pillars of the natyamandapa and kalyanamandapa of the Virabhadra temple at Lepakshi, on the exterior walls of the temples at Pushpagiri of Kadapa District and Srikalahastisvara temple at Kalahasti.⁵

6. Gandharvas

The Vijayangara sculptors took interest and care in the representation of semi devine celestial musicians. They carved a beautiful apsara consort of a gandharva on the pillars of the Virabhadra temple at Lepakshi. It is hybrid form and decorated with haras, kankanas, makhara, etc. She is holding a vina in her first hand where as the other hand is kept in suchi-hasta. She is adorned with a Kiritamakuta. In the mother sculpture a gandharva is shown holding an incense burner in his right hand. He is also represented in hybrid form. The curved tail and the shapely legs are extremely representations are also found on the entire walls of the Chennakesava temple at Pushpagiri. The representation of gandharvas in Indian art was first started by the Buddhist sculptors. They are often depicted with bind like lower parts, with wings attached to their arms. Their upper part represented human form. They are adorned with crows, ear rings and other ornaments. In the Vijayanagara representations they have neither wings nor shown in a flying attitude. They are not even carrying

garlands, they are mostly shown playing on musical instruments and rarely depicted in the act of offering incense apparently to the gods and goddesses.

7. Chaitya Arch or Kudu Motif

The Chaitya Arch or Kudu Motif is one of the important and most frequently found as a decorative motif in the Vijayanagara temples. This motif is generally found on the adhishtanas, surmounting portion of the kapotas and pilasters, top of the prasada walls and below the first story of the Vimana, gopuradvaras, Pillars, pedestals of the individual images, domical and sala crowing numbers of the Vimanas and on the projecting cornices of doorways. Both plain and highly ornamented kudu motifs are found in the Vijayanagara temples. The plain examples are found on the lower section of the pillars and images in the Virabhadra temple at Lepakshi. In this case they are simply shown as a semicircular arch with a square projection on the summit and a plain circular cavity in the centre. In the second type a kirtimukha is represented at the open and flower bands, curved in shape are shown emerging from its mouth. This type of examples are found in plenty on the basal section of sculptures carved on the pillars of the kalyanamandapa at Lepakshi. Its final development is noticed on the exterior of the Vijayanagara temples at Pushpagiri, Tadipatri, Srikalahsti, etc. The most favourate decoration on the edges of the roof in the Vijayanagara temples is a row of brick built arches containing deity figures in stucco or without them. The mahamandapas in the temples of Somapalem, Kadiri, Markapuram and Tirupati are best examples from this decoration. Temples without this decoration are the Siva and Rama temples of Penukonda, temples in the Chandragiri fort and the Kalyana Venkateswara temple of Srinivasamangapuram.

8. Upapitha

The upapitha, adhistana wall proper and the superstructure are the principal architectural elements of these gopura gateways. Upapitha is the lowest number. Its purpose is to give stability and security to the structure laid over it. Both simple and highly ornate upapithas are noticed in the gopura

gateways of the Vijayanagara temples. A simple and plain upapitha normally contains a broad upana a couple of pattika, gala and alingana pattika. The gala is generally a broad one cut into square and rectangular compartments by using nakulapadas (dwarf pilasters). Sometimes, the alingana pattika is adorned with plain kudu motifs or ornamental chaitya motifs in high relief. The best examples of this type are found in the gopura gateways of the Chandrasekhara and Varahaswami temples at Hampi and the Chennakesava temple at Somapalem and Pushpagiri. Fleasing moulded and gracefully adorned upapithasa are noticed in the gopura gateways that are found infront of the temples at Mangapuram, Tirupati, Tadipatri, Narayanavanam, Millampalli, etc.

9. Adhistana

It is generally found on the top of *upapitha*. Both plain and highly ornamental adhistanas are found in the *gopura* gateways of the Vijayanagara temples. The *gopura* dvaras that are found in the front of the Chennakesava group of temples at Pushpagiri, Chennakesava temple at Somapalem, the Kalyanavenkateswara temple at Mangapuram, Chandrasekhara temple at Hampi, etc. are having plain ($sim\rho le$) adhistanas.

10. Flora and Fauna

During the Vijayanagara period the sculptors had taken special interest in the representation of flora and fauna varieties of floral designs and lineal caring's are found on the pattas of the adhishtanas, on the shafts of the pillars, pilasters, on the Kumbhapanjaras and on the ceilings are found exquisite final carvings and floral designs. The walls of the north and south gopuras of the Ramalingeswara temple at Tadipatri, contain fine floral designs and creeper decoration on the ceilings. They are designs in the pattern of wide open lotus flowers. The vertical on either side of the entrance of the gopura of Chennakesava temple at Markapuram of Kurnool district and another gopura of Chennakesava temple at Pushpagiri of Kadapa district are decorated with the figure of a women standing under a creeper in a graceful pose.

11. Doorways

The gopura gateways are provided with either plain or highly ornate rectangular door ways. The door-jambs and the lintels of the door-ways are decorated with floral designs, dwarfish ganas, figure sculptures illustrating the avataras of Vishnu, seated Sardhulas etc.

The door-way of the gopura gateway of Virabhadraswami temple at Lepakshi has to massive jambs on either side surmounted by and imposing lintel. The jambs and the lintel are decorated with a prominent meandering floral creeper and miniature figure sculptures. On either side bottom of these door-jambs, graceful female figures holding creepers are repsented.

12. Ceilings

The Ceilings are also one of the Principal features of temple interior. The Vijayanagara sculptors paid special attention in making the central ceilings of the Natya-mandapas, Sabha-mandapas and Kalyana-mandapas highly decorative and charming. In the Natya-mandapa of the Virabhadra Swami temple at Lepakshi a set of three massive and projecting brackets adorned with the characteristic Vijayanagara Pushpa-Potikas are arranged on each corner of the ceiling.¹⁰

13. Conclusion

On the whole in the Vijayanagara temples adorned with decorative motifs like wall decorations, Human figures, kirtimukhas, Dwarfs, makaratonanas, Gandharvas, kudu motifs, upapitha, adhishtana, Animals and birds, etc. some of these decoratives are continuation of their predecessors like cholas. Some innovative designs are also followed by Vijayanagara artists. Lotus design on the ceilings of the Vijayanagara temples is of special attractions.

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